

REPORTS

IN REGARD TO THE

TRANSFER OF THE BUREAUS AND DIVISIONS

OF THE

MERCHANT MARINE

IN THE

TREASURY DEPARTMENT

TO THE

NAVY DEPARTMENT.

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REVENUE-MARINE SERVICE.

TRANSFER TO NAVY DEPARTMENT.

REPORT OF CHIEF OF REVENUE-MARINE DIVISION.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
January 27, 1883.

SIR: I have the honor to submit the following report upon the proposition to transfer the administration of the Revenue-Marine Service to the Navy Department, and the provisions of the bill, H. R. No. 7157, which you have placed in my hands:

The Secretary of the Navy, in his annual report submitted at the beginning of the present Congress, recommends that the Revenue-Marine Service, together with other bureaus under the Treasury Department, be transferred to the Navy Department.

He gives as principal reasons for the transfer—

1. That it would afford a useful field for the employment of a portion of the large number of young naval officers who are now borne upon the rolls of the Navy, but for whose employment no occupation is offered in the legitimate duties of their corps.

2. That the service of young naval officers upon the revenue-cutters would be of direct benefit in their profession, and to the country in case of war, giving them a familiarity with the coast and a knowledge of local pilotage that would not otherwise be obtained.

3. That the change would be in the interests of economy, in view of the fact that the Government is keeping up a "Revenue Navy," consisting of the present Revenue Marine.

Some subsidiary reasons for the proposed transfer are also given in the report of the honorable Secretary, as—

- (1.) That the service of the cruising-cutters is strictly naval, and

the duties not distinguishable in kind from those of naval officers; that the discipline is naval, "as far as naval discipline can be carried on outside of the Navy Department."

(2.) That the cruising-cutters are armed with great guns and small-arms, and that in time of war these vessels "have always been pressed into the naval service."

(3.) That twenty-three of the cutters, "which may be classed as gun-boats, are good vessels for their class, and must always be regarded as part of the available naval force."

(4.) Further, that "revenue-marine officers would be benefited by the change, as they would receive, in addition to such advantages as they enjoy under their present status, the benefits of a permanent naval commission."

The reasons named are not without weight, and if sustained by the facts, and sufficient considerations do not exist why the fundamental practice of the Government and legal status of nearly a hundred years should remain undisturbed, would deserve the serious consideration of Congress.

Organization and Purpose of the Revenue Marine.

The Revenue-Cutter Service was established by act of Congress of 1790. (Vol. I, U. S. Statutes, p. 175.) Its conception and general plan were the work of Alexander Hamilton, who, in organizing the system of finance and revenue for the country, deemed the revenue-cutters an essential part of the scheme.

The plan of the Service as originally devised has never been materially changed, but the Service has been augmented from time to time with the growth of the country in territory and population, and its duties have been increased in scope and number with the natural development of the commercial and maritime interests, whose protection was the object of its origin.

It has been made by law a part of the available naval force of the Government in time of war, (act of March 2, 1799,) and several acts have been passed to add to its efficiency. The discipline and management of the Service have also been much improved in recent years.

Under the existing organization, the collectors of customs, who are charged with the immediate work of collecting the revenue, have general charge of the cutters and can direct them in the performance of any duty involving the protection of the revenue.

This Service embraces not only the protection of the revenue derived

from imposts on imported goods, but that derivable from all other sources upon the waters. It has also been extended to include the protection of our national timber reserves against depredations, and our mercantile shipping against the perils of the sea.

While the collectors of customs have supervision of the individual cutters, as described, the Secretary of the Treasury is charged with the immediate control and management of the Service as well as the stationing of the vessels and officers. The present arrangement exists without confusion or discord and with great public advantage, the cutters fulfilling with entire satisfaction the objects of their creation. No complaints of their lack of usefulness or adaptability to their duties are received; no allegations of incompetency or general unfitness. On the contrary, the testimony to their efficiency and value is almost universal, both from customs officers and the owners and masters of vessels engaged in conducting the floating commerce of the country. At one period only of the history of the Service have unharmonious relations arisen between the customs officers and those in charge of revenue vessels. This was during the period when officers of the Navy were detailed to command revenue-cutters, beginning about the year 1821 and ending in 1832, and it was on account of the complications springing out of this relation that the practice was abandoned in the year last named.

Condition and Effectiveness of the Revenue Marine.

The effectiveness of the revenue vessels in the prevention of smuggling is not always apparent, their strict guard upon the coast line having long since broken up smuggling by cargo; but whenever an exigency has required the withdrawal of the vessels for any considerable time from a stretch of coast line, the smugglers have resumed operations. This was well illustrated during the enforced absence for several months of the revenue vessel from the coast of Florida, a few years since, when two schooners of respectable size began the business of smuggling rum and cigars from Cuba, their occupation prospering until the return of the cutter.

At the present time frequent applications for an extension of the Service as now conducted are received by this Department, and none for its curtailment or discontinuance.

The amount of work performed by the revenue vessels under these

numerous calls for their services is shown by the following table, exhibiting statistically the record of the ten years from 1871 to 1881:

Year ended—	Miles sailed.	Vessels boarded and examined.	Vessels seized or reported for violation of law.	Vessels assisted in distress.	Lives saved.
June 30, 1872.....	166, 198	24, 932	1, 594	219	37
June 30, 1873.....	185, 668	30, 543	1, 605	210	109
June 30, 1874.....	169, 882	27, 748	1, 810	153	4
June 30, 1875.....	198, 117	22, 225	1, 245	195	81
June 30, 1876.....	194, 261	23, 686	1, 225	195	45
June 30, 1877.....	196, 036	25, 396	1, 260	204	60
June 30, 1878.....	238, 505	31, 096	2, 009	192	76
June 30, 1879.....	252, 112	32, 853	3, 444	210	123
June 30, 1880.....	265, 763	36, 318	3, 556	114	65
June 30, 1881.....	282, 027	29, 101	3, 163	148	141
Total.....	2, 148, 569	283, 898	20, 911	1, 840	741
Average per year.....	214, 857	28, 390	2, 091	184	74

That this work is satisfactory to the collectors of customs and other customs officers immediately associated with the Service, and that it is beneficial and gratifying to the general public, numerous testimonials and letters of commendation on file in the Department abundantly attest.

That the Service is now efficient, and that it is improving from year to year, is shown by contrasting with the foregoing table the following statement of the work performed during the period of ten years beginning with 1861 and ending with 1870, compiled by calendar years:

Years.	Miles sailed.	Vessels boarded and examined.	Vessels seized or reported for violation of law.	Vessels assisted in distress.	Lives saved.
1861.....	159, 574	12, 991	111	129	20
1862.....	147, 455	9, 728	143	134	23
1863.....	174, 111	9, 386	118	117	19
1864.....	99, 326	38, 815	103	61	3
1865.....	126, 552	17, 375	90	116	4
1866.....	192, 597	8, 607	133	143	33
1867.....	192, 313	10, 850	154	126	14
1868.....	155, 910	7, 923	83	108	25
1869.....	156, 910	7, 927	79	109	25
1870.....	105, 903	9, 386	149	175	18
Total.....	1, 510, 651	132, 988	1, 163	1, 218	187
Average per year.....	151, 065	13, 299	116	122	18

These comparisons show that the Service is now doing its maximum of work.

The following table, giving the expenditures on account of the Revenue-Marine Service for a series of years ended with June 30, 1882,

shows that the increased amount of work has been effected without an increase in the cost of the Service:

For the fiscal year ended—

June 30, 1868.....	\$1,293,661 67	June 30, 1876.....	\$842,912 68
June 30, 1869.....	1,185,702 26	June 30, 1877.....	841,176 31
June 30, 1870.....	1,133,670 15	June 30, 1878.....	844,001 70
June 30, 1871.....	1,121,026 43	June 30, 1879.....	844,527 25
June 30, 1872.....	930,249 81	June 30, 1880.....	845,333 74
June 30, 1873.....	995,308 88	June 30, 1881.....	846,791 99
June 30, 1874.....	903,601 83	June 30, 1882.....	846,423 34
June 30, 1875.....	897,899 56		

Indeed, the period of the greatest usefulness and efficiency in its civil work, if the amount of service rendered affords an index, is marked by the lowest annual expenditures, as will be seen by comparing the work and expenditures of the past six years with like data for any similar period.

To the foregoing data is to be added a statement of the relief-work of the revenue vessels, which is a most practical evidence of their usefulness. During the last six years alone 678 vessels and their cargoes, imperilled by the sea, have been assisted by the cutters, aggregating in value \$16,181,542.80, and averaging \$2,696,923.80 per annum. But this is not all, for in the same period 642 persons have been rescued from drowning. This does not include the persons on the vessels assisted.

The greater number of the revenue-marine vessels have been constructed upon specifications prepared under the particular direction of the present management, and under the immediate supervision of the officers of the corps. They have been devised with special reference to the wants of the several stations and the character of the waters to be covered in their cruising. A few exceptions only to the rule exist, consisting of steamers acquired during or soon after the war, which have been retained in the Service as too costly to discard; but, with these exceptions, the cutters are admirably adapted to the needs of the Service, and many of them are considered models of their size and type.

The officers are proportioned in numbers to the requirements of the Service, and could the places of the superannuated be filled with active men, the corps would be unexceptionable as to its *personnel*. The character and habits of the officers are good. Prompt and willing attention to duty and zealous pride in their work are the rule.

Special Training Requisite for Revenue-Marine Officers.

A knowledge of customs laws, of the navigation laws, and numerous other statutory provisions bearing upon the duties confided to the Service, as well as a familiarity with the regulations and decisions affecting the varied maritime interests of the country, are essential to the skilled revenue officer. Such knowledge is not the acquisition of two or three years, but requires a long period of application and experience. The officers of the revenue-cutters give their whole lives, not only to the business of perfecting their professional knowledge, but in familiarizing themselves with the multifarious and delicate questions found in the laws whose enforcement is committed to the Revenue Marine.

A glance at the numerous duties of revenue vessels indicates the wide scope of information necessary to revenue-marine officers. Their primary work is that of protecting the revenue against smuggling; but besides this they enforce the law requiring license, enrolment, and registry of vessels; the law requiring life-saving appliances, as boats and life-preservers, to be kept on board merchant vessels; the laws prohibiting overloading with passengers; those requiring lights to be exhibited by merchant vessels; that providing for name and hailing-port to be affixed; that assessing a tax for the support of marine hospitals; those in aid of the quarantine systems of the States; those for suppressing piracy on the seas; those for preserving the timber reserves of the United States; they enforce the neutrality laws; they prevent unlawful traffic in rum and fire-arms in Alaska; they protect the seal-fisheries; they suppress mutinies on board merchant vessels; they extinguish fire upon merchant shipping in our harbors; they carry out the humane enactments of Congress in aid of distressed mariners during the inclement season. They form, under the law of 1878, an important part of the Life-Saving Service. To the duties devolved upon them by law or regulation are added numerous others, to which they are detailed from time to time; an instance of which is the part borne by the Service in the work of arresting the spread of yellow fever in the Southwest the past summer.

The officers of the Revenue Marine now constitute one of the best fitted, most thoroughly trained, most industrious, intelligent, active, and efficient bodies of public servants under the Government.

The cruising of the revenue-cutters when engaged in the protection of the revenue brings them principally into the waters along the coast near the shore, thus subjecting them always to dangers of navigation

far greater than are encountered in mid-ocean. But they are, furthermore, called upon, as noted above, (under the act of December 22, 1837,) during the inclement and dangerous season to endure the hardships and perils of cruising in aid of vessels in distress. By such practice and experience they become in years as proficient and skilled in coastwise cruising as is possible of acquirement, but this perfection of training stands for a lifetime of study and toil.

Radical Impropriety of the Transfer.

It thus appears that the Revenue-Marine Service is now, and has been for almost a century, an important and essential part of the customs service; that, as at present organized and conducted, it is harmonious in its relations to the customs service and other interests committed to its care; that it is efficient in the performance of its work and has attained the maximum of usefulness; that it is economical in the cost of maintenance; that its vessels are well adapted to the needs of the Service, and in good condition and properly equipped; that its officers are properly qualified for their duties, and perform them satisfactorily.

Congress ought not, under these conditions, to change the status of this Service without grave and important reasons. Nevertheless, it is proposed to break up the present system and make a startling and radical change in the Service by transferring it as a whole to another Department of the Government.

From the facts stated, it could scarcely be hoped that the change would better the Revenue Marine or add to its efficiency in any respect. We can look, then, only to the reasons given by the Secretary of the Navy. It is for the benefit of the Navy that the change is sought; and it is not so much for the benefit of the Navy as a whole, as for the younger officers of the naval corps, that the subject is now pressed upon Congress.

I do not believe that the measure will meet with public approval. Our people, in that impatience of aristocratic rule which is their characteristic, have always shown a strong dislike to giving the military predominance in time of peace. Even during the period of domestic war, the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus* was one of the last acts prior to the striking down by force of arms of the civil tribunals, while one of the first steps in rehabilitating a commonwealth was the re-establishment of the civil courts in order that the Government might be exercised through the legitimate civil channels. That Americans

detest the bayonet, except as a means of national defence, needs no assertion. In organizing a force to protect the revenue, special care was taken by the founders of the Government to avoid offence to this sentiment. The revenue-marine officers were made officers of the customs, and while subjected necessarily to military discipline and training aboard ship, discharged all their functions in entire subordination to the civil branch. They have been regarded as a national constabulary rather than as a naval force. At the same time, Congress, as if to show more conclusively its intention that the cutter system should always remain attached to the civil establishment, by the act of 1799 provided for the only exigency in which it need be availed of as a part of the naval force, giving the President authority to cause its vessels to co-operate with the Navy when their services should be necessary. That was the time, if ever, to attach it to the Navy. Failure to do so at that time argues the purpose of Congress to retain it forever as a part of the civil force.

History shows that no change in existing law is necessary to enable the Revenue Marine to be used for the national defence if demanded. Its vessels have participated in every war with signal public advantage. Its officers have always acquitted themselves well in such service. They have not failed in their duty. Nothing in their performances has indicated that a transfer to the Navy would make the Service more effective in such emergency.

The people have always jealously guarded the civil functions from the encroachments of the military power, and have shown a desire to restrict the Army and Navy in times of peace to the most limited numbers compatible with the manning of the forts, the defence of the frontier, and the protection of our flag in foreign waters. Any attempt to induct the Army and Navy into the civil offices has been met and promptly restrained by adverse public sentiment.

The present system has been maintained for nearly a hundred years, whether in peace or war, in prosperity or calamity to the country, and has stood the test well; but it is now proposed by the pending bill to throw away the experience of years and enter upon the field of experiment. Hereafter the Secretary of the Treasury, when desiring to hunt down the smuggler or check any infraction of laws whose execution falls under the Treasury Department, must call upon the naval force of the United States. True, the bill provides that the vessels of the Revenue-Marine Corps of the Navy shall, *upon requisition* of the Secretary of the Treasury, be assigned for the protection of the revenue, but certainly his authority over the Corps would be secondary

to that of the Secretary of the Navy. He would have no control over the discipline of the Corps; he could not change the stations or control the movements generally of the vessels; he could not even select officers for special service or particular duties without an appeal to the Navy Department. We should thus have the anomaly of the Department charged with the collecting of the revenue, having no real control over the force for protecting it, and the Department charged with protecting the revenue having no hand in collecting it.

The Real Motive of the Project.

What is the excuse held out for introducing this confusion into the now harmonious and efficient civil system? What is the motive for inducting the military into the civil offices? What incentive is offered for overturning the practice of a century and reversing the judgment of the founders of our national polity? What is the argument presented to Congress for legalizing this startling innovation upon the traditional policy of the Government? The reply is found in the assertion of the honorable the Secretary of the Navy that employment must be had for the surplus Navy officers; either this must be done or a large reduction will be made, Congress having at its last session inserted the knife into the bud in the matter of reduction, to be followed soon by laying the axe at the root of the tree.

Is it true that we are asked to build up an aristocracy of naval officers in our country? These young men having been educated by the nation, at a cost of many hundreds of dollars for each, while the ordinary sons of the people were gaining their education with personal toil and sweat, are the people to be now laid under still further tribute for the benefit of the favored naval officers, and even the civil force displaced in order to afford them continuous tenure?

In the civil branches of the Government, when the duties of an officer cease, when the occupation is gone, it follows that the office itself is abolished and the incumbent relegated to private life. No one thinks of asking the continuance of a land office after the public lands within its scope are disposed of. Also, when the business of a revenue district ceases the collector and his employ  s are discharged. Yet here is a class already favored by a liberal education and generous maintenance at the hands of the country, when the legitimate business in the line of their training no longer offers, asking the adoption of a new theory of government, by which may be turned over to them, to furnish excuse for their retention in office, the work now being well done by a body of the civil officers.

With the fact in view that in the theory of our Government the place of the military is in strict subordinacy to the civil power, is the recommendation of the head of the Navy Department defensible? Is it not to be condemned as in conflict with the principles of republican government?

We are told that the Revenue Marine is not naturally connected with the Treasury Department; that it does belong naturally to the Navy Department; and are left to infer by the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy, that its transfer would improve its administration and promote its efficiency. It is true that no defect of management is pointed out, and no particular in which it would be improved by such change.

Does the Condition of the Navy Warrant the Change?

The bald recommendation for the transfer comes, too, upon the heels of a dolorous statement of the present deplorable condition of the Navy. Out of fifty vessels of war, one only of which is of the first rate, but thirty-one are in commission, and all are condemned as unfit to cope with the war-ships of other countries. Not one modern high-powered cannon is included in their armament, for the excellent reason that there is not one such in the whole Navy. Of the eight navy-yards, with their immense and costly plant of docks, workshops, dwellings, machinery, and tools, five at least are reported as unnecessary. The Secretary gives a sample-day of their cost, (November 11,) for which the total pay-roll at all the yards was \$11,319. The enormous disproportion of fifty-nine officers to every vessel in commission is adverted to in the report, coupled with the suggestion of a further reduction in this superfluous list beyond that provided for by Congress last summer.

Following these lamentable disclosures, the Secretary touches softly upon the system of favoritism that has prevailed regarding assignments of officers, sadly remarking that if allowed to continue, the naval service will soon become fatally demoralized.

The Secretary might have gone further, and shown that while other nations, on an expenditure proportionately far below that of our country, have kept abreast with all modern improvements in ships and guns, we have steadily deteriorated in both, until practically the zero-mark has been reached.

Comparative Statement of the Navies of Six Great Nations.

Nation.	Number of ships.	Vessels of war.		Number of modern war cruisers.	Number of officers.*	Number of seamen, boys, and marines.	Number of men to each officer.	Annual cost.
		Number of iron-clads or armored ships.	Thickness of armor.					
			<i>Inches.</i>					
Austria	58	13	4½ to 14	7	661	7,469	11+	\$4,600,000
Germany.....	79, and 13 building.	20, and 7 building.	5 to 10	13, and 6 building.	682	6,683	10—	11,164,000
Italy	466	17	4½ to 22	49	989	9,723	10—	8,900,000
United States ..	§139	20	4½ to 7	12	2,033	9,322	4½	16,100,000
France	356	59	4¾ to 22	50	6,649	63,634	9½	41,000,000
Great Britain...	553	75	3 to 24	115	4,988	53,812	11	51,800,000

* Including officers of marines.

† Besides many smaller vessels.

‡ Four of these are the largest, swiftest, and most heavily armored and armed ships ever built, carrying each four 100-ton Armstrong guns.

§ Of these only fifty-seven are serviceable, including small despatch vessels, torpedo rams, and the monitors for harbor defence.

|| Monitors for harbor defence, including four new ones begun, and three requiring extensive repairs.

Examining this table, we observe that the United States have 25 per cent. as many ships, (including the unserviceable,) but only 17½ per cent. as many in commission as England. That to man these we have 18 per cent. as many men as England, or about the same proportion of men to vessels, if tonnage were equal, but the ratio of our officers to those of England is 41 per cent., or nearly 2½ times greater than that of ships or men.

While Italy has a powerful navy, with forty-nine heavily armored modern war cruisers, four of which are equal to any naval ships in the world; while she employs nearly a thousand more men to man them than we muster, she has less than half the number of officers, and spends only about one-half as much annually to carry on her efficient and formidable force as we spend upon our insignificant collection of antiquated hulks.

A further glance at the table shows that the United States has more than double the proportion of officers to men of any nation. Could there be a stronger proof that our Navy is top-heavy with officers than is shown in this comparison? Even if the United States Navy should become in years as strong in ships and guns as that of Italy, half its present number of officers would yet suffice. There seems no likelihood that any future exigency will arise which would warrant the retention and support of the great horde of idlers now on the rolls. Even if a remote contingency would warrant it, the demoralizing effect of idleness meanwhile upon even a willing and able body of men would weigh strongly against such retention.

The most shameful misapplication of means to ends in the management of the Navy is, however, shown in the column of annual expenditures when considered in connection with the facts in the rest of the table; for while the United States have a Navy not worth mentioning in comparison with that of either of these great powers, the statistics show that it is spending yearly a far greater proportionate sum upon the floating mass of incompetency known as its Navy than any of these nations spends upon its powerfully armed fleet.

Our Navy expends yearly $29\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. as much as England for construction and repairs and cost of yards and docks, yet while England includes in this the yearly addition to her navy of 10,000 to 15,000 tons in new vessels, we include none.

At our ratio of expenditure we should add 3,000 to 5,000 in new tonnage every year. Although we add nothing, yet this ceaseless grind of \$11,319 a day for maintaining the navy-yards (five-eighths of which, according to the Secretary's report, is unnecessary) goes steadily on, and the annual millions for construction and repair continue to be swallowed up and leave no monument.

The figures of the table, although they touch only upon principal points of comparison, are full of instruction and significance. Were the comparison carried further, to embrace the details of management and expenditure, the results would be still more astonishing.

It would be interesting to inquire how the three hundred and sixty-nine millions of dollars which Congress has provided for the Navy within the seventeen years since the close of the late war has been spent; to learn by what superlative neglect our Navy has dwindled from the 675 vessels which it maintained at the beginning of these seventeen years to the 139 of all classes it now carries on the list, yet among which is not a single effective modern cruiser. It would be interesting to ascertain what maelstrom has sucked down this goodly fleet of 536 ships of the Navy, their decks strewn with the nation's gold to the tune of more than *twenty-one millions* a year.

It would be a further interesting study, in view of the fact that we have neither vessels nor ordnance in the Navy, to determine what has become of the vast sum of \$98,435,875 which has been appropriated within the past seventeen years for the construction and repairs alone of naval vessels, and of the \$12,832,029.23 which Congress has provided for ordnance during the same period, not to speak of the \$32,724,712.48 appropriated for the maintenance of navy-yards, making the towering aggregate of \$143,992,617 which the nation has contributed towards the vessels of the Navy and their armaments since

the last war. Such enormous expenditures of money in ordinary business are expected to produce some fabric, some edifice or structure; in this instance the result seems nothing.

It is not my purpose to charge intentional extravagance or profligacy upon the Navy; but I do say that the published reports constituting the financial history of that Department afford an inviting field of inquiry when the Navy seeks the absorption of the civil departments on the ground of the superiority of the naval methods in management and economy. If the school of economy to which the Revenue Marine is to be turned over is such as that shown in the affairs of the Navy, if such is the management by which the promised improvement is to be gained, if the results indicated are such as flow from the "superior discipline" of the Navy, it is respectfully suggested that Congress pause before trying to improve the civil service by the experiment which is invited.

Reasons alleged for Transfer not Valid.

As an argument for the transfer, considerable stress is laid upon the benefit to be derived by the younger naval officers in their service upon the revenue-cutters, from the practice it would give them in handling ships in shoal waters and narrow harbors and the opportunity it would afford them of learning pilotage. No one will dispute that they need this sort of knowledge, but I venture to suggest that they need not be consumed with ungratified ambition in this regard, even under present conditions. Furloughed naval officers might now, without infringing any law, find employment on merchant steamers and ships in the coasting trade, where the facilities for learning pilotage and the handling of vessels would be equal to, if not better than, those on revenue vessels, and thus be brought into useful association with a class of maritime officers who maintain their character and positions through their business energy and the mastery of their profession, rather than through advantages of education or social standing.

It would, indeed, seem creditable, were the 236 naval officers now waiting orders (for the payment of whose salaries an aggregate of \$376,000 is annually drawn from the public treasury) to find some useful employment by which they might improve themselves in their profession, if they are to be retained.

If to the naval officers waiting orders we add those on shore or other duty, we find 880 officers not required to officer the ships, drawing in salaries annually the total of \$1,944,500. This calculation does not embrace the officers of the Marine Corps, who receive yearly

\$174,040. Yet Congress is asked, as a measure of economy, to turn over the Revenue Marine, costing only about \$850,000 annually, to a Department wasting every year upon its surplus officers at least one million dollars.

It is understood that the claim is advanced that the Revenue Marine and other kindred branches of the civil administration which do business on the water should be turned over to the Navy, because the latter is also a floating service. As well might the Army, on the score of being a land service, demand that all the work of the Government upon the land be turned over to the War Department. With these theories prevailing, we should indeed simplify our form of government, for we should need none but military officers to manage the affairs of the country.

The fact is, the business of the revenue-marine officer is as distinct from that of the naval officer as one land service is from another. The military drill and instruction of the revenue-marine officer do not necessarily make him a naval officer, any more than the present education of a naval officer fits him to manage vessels in harbors and along the shoal waters of the coast. It is pertinent to mention here that naval officers in command of vessels have been particularly unfortunate when cruising near the coast. A noteworthy evidence of this is seen in the disasters which have befallen their vessels voyaging to Alaska and the Northern Pacific waters within the past few years. The steamer "Suwanee," 746 tons, struck on a rock and was lost in Shadwell Passage, British Columbia, *en route* to Sitka, July 9, 1868; the steamer "Saginaw," 282 tons, was lost while on a surveying mission, October 29, 1870, on a shoal off Midway Island, Pacific Ocean; and the "Saranac," a steamer of 1,238 tons, struck on a reef and was lost, June 18, 1875, in Seymour Narrows, British Columbia, *en route* to Sitka. Not a few (comparatively speaking) of the 536 naval vessels which have vanished within the last seventeen years may be accounted for in like manner.

These vessels were lost in ordinary cruising. In contrast to these losses may be placed the fact that the vessels of the Revenue Marine have cruised to Alaska every year since the acquisition of that Territory, in 1867, without loss or serious damage to any vessel; singularly enough, one of the few instances of a cutter touching upon the bottom having occurred to the "Corwin" last summer when transporting to San Francisco the people of the lost naval exploring steamer "Rodgers," destroyed by fire the preceding winter in the Arctic Ocean.

The facts presented effectually settle in the negative the question of increased economy of management, which it has been claimed would result from a transfer of the Revenue Marine to the Navy Department.

There is one slender argument yet remaining, that of the revenue-marine cadet system. Congress provided for the system only in 1876, and in such a modest way that the steps in its conduct so far have been necessarily more experimental than otherwise.

The vacancies in the Revenue-Marine Corps average from four to five a year. The small number of cadets appointed for these vacancies are educated on a revenue-cutter without inconvenience. Congress, in providing for the system, (volume 19, United States Statutes, page 107,) made no appropriation for its maintenance, and none has ever been asked. The cadets are appointed to places made vacant in the grade of third lieutenant, and the vacancies in the latter grade are held open until the graduation of the cadets. The pay of cadets being but three-fourths that of a third lieutenant, there is a considerable annual saving from the difference of pay for such places as are held in abeyance. Indeed, this saving more than equals all the expenses of the cadet system. The instruction is given on board a vessel fulfilling her regular duties upon one of the stations of the Service at a point where a cutter has always had headquarters. The results of the trial already had of the system are favorable, although it has some defects, one of which is that the course is too short. It should be extended to four years. The pay is, on the other hand, too much, and should be reduced to about \$500 a year. Under no circumstances can the cadet system of the Revenue Marine ever prove embarrassing or expensive even in a small degree as is that of Annapolis in a large degree. As to the suggestion that these cadets ought to be educated at the Naval Academy, the answer is made that the course of study and the methods of instruction at that institution are not suited to the wants of the Revenue Marine. If the attempt were made to instruct revenue-marine cadets at the Naval Academy, it would be found necessary to provide a separate course for them. If the present inexpensive system of instruction for revenue-marine cadets were to be discontinued, it would be far preferable to return to the old system of recruiting the corps of officers by means of competitive examinations, open to persons who have already had practical sea experience in the merchant service, rather than to draw from graduates of the Annapolis school. The system of admission upon competitive examination would not bar out young men in civil life who had been educated at Annapolis, but they would have to compete for the places like any

other applicants. The system referred to, as being in vogue up to 1876, had in it many commendable features; and, while desirous of giving the cadet system further trial under such improved conditions as have been heretofore recommended, there is no disposition to cling to it unless improvements can be added. As before stated, the services differ so widely in their objects and aims as to be practically distinct.

With but four to six vacancies occurring annually in the Revenue Marine, how meagre the argument that the absorption of this Service as proposed would afford appreciable relief to the naval corps, whose ranks are burdened with nearly nine hundred clamorous idlers!

Navy Methods Cumbersome and Expensive.

Were the revenue vessels, now sound, staunch, and seaworthy, turned over to the Navy Department, what reason have we to believe that they would not soon become worthless under such management as has brought the Navy to its present state of degeneracy and ruin? These vessels would be subject to the navy-yard systems. Their repairs must fall under the various heads of bureaus of the Navy Department. The work now done under one direction or management would under naval control be variously parcelled out. Each revenue-cutter would pass through some such ordeal as this: The Bureau of Navigation would have the assignment to stations of the vessels and officers; the Bureau of Construction and Repair would take in hand the hull; the Bureau of Steam-Engineering, the boilers and machinery; the Bureau of Ordnance would see to the cannon and small-arms; the Bureau of Provisions and Clothing would provide for the clothing and rations; the Bureau of Equipment and Recruiting look after the vessel's outfits and the enlistments of the sailors; the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery see to the replenishing of the medicine-locker and place a surplus medical officer in charge. Should the craft become utterly dismembered in this circuitous voyaging from one bureau to another, she might be turned over to the Bureau of Yards and Docks, under whose supervision she could find a resting-place in some snug berth where she might decay and drop to pieces undisturbed. Seriously speaking, this bureau system could not but prove cumbersome and expensive applied to revenue vessels. Its circumlocution would necessarily cause embarrassing delay in effecting the simple repairs that are frequently required upon the cutters to keep them in condition for active work. Such delays in case of vessels whose service is often valuable only as it can be rendered with promptness

and celerity would be especially detrimental. These detentions would prevent a ready compliance with the requisitions of the Secretary of the Treasury for vessels for special duty.

Again, the cost of doing work at the navy-yards is well known to be much greater than by contract with private parties. The system of labor alone would cause an increase in cost, which would be augmented by other causes adverted to before.

It is inevitable that great loss in economy would result from the transfer.

Would Smugglers be good Customs' Officers?

Aside from the question of economy or other administrative reasons before referred to, there is another quite important one for withholding from naval officers the delicate duty of protecting the revenue. Notwithstanding the provision of law (section 1624, United States Revised Statutes) that "no person connected with the Navy shall, under any pretence, import in a public vessel any article which is liable to the payment of duty," from time immemorial one of the most difficult kinds of smuggling against which the vigilance of the customs officers has been directed, is the introduction of dutiable goods in the baggage of naval officers returning upon vessels of the Navy from foreign stations. While stringent regulations are maintained and enforced against the smuggling of merchandise by passengers of the general public arriving at our ports from abroad, not only their baggage but even their persons being subject to search by the inspectors, no certain means exist of reaching the personal baggage of the naval officers returning by their own ships. No oath or certificate is required of them that they have not in their effects dutiable goods in fraud of the customs revenue. Enjoying such immunity there is no check or restraint upon them beyond that imposed by a sensitive conscience. Statesmen, judges, tradesmen, and others of the general public are not exempted from the search, but naval officers may escape it. A casual inquiry into the subject covering only the period of five years, beginning with 1878 and ending with December, 1882, shows that five naval vessels returning from foreign stations within that period have been used by naval officers in violation of section 1624 of the statutes, as transports for the importation of merchandise, and that the attempt was made to land such merchandise without the payment of the duties prescribed by law. The value of goods (appraised by the naval officers themselves at a nominal price in many cases) thus unlawfully imported and landed is over seven thousand dollars. The number of officers of the Navy directly concerned in this business

was over fifty. Forty-two packages were seized at the express office where they were being shipped beyond the reach of customs officers. Some of these packages were addressed to naval officers, others to families of naval officers, and others still to private citizens. One package, containing two hundred and eighty-eight pairs of kid gloves, was addressed to a merchant in New York City. In this connection must be noted the remarkable fact that these scandalous infractions of law and the naval regulations seem not to have been visited with discipline.

If naval officers, sworn to observe the laws of their country, can thus unblushingly violate the law, as well as the duty of good citizens; if they are thus recreant to the trusts with which they are charged, can they ask to have other and more delicate duties intrusted to their keeping? Would not naval officers commanding revenue vessels be tempted to shield their brother officers returning with the "spoils" of a foreign cruise, especially since their turn to go abroad might be near at hand? Would the naval officer fresh from abroad, his baggage plethoric with such peculations, be the proper person to guard the coffers of the Treasury? Would the Department, which by its failure to punish these violations seems to wink at plundering the revenue, be the proper one to superintend its protection?

Failure of Former Attempts at Transfer.

The movement now being made for the transfer of the Revenue Marine is not the first attempt of the Navy to absorb this Service. A similar attempt was made in 1843, and met with deserved failure. The Hon. Walter Forward, then Secretary of the Treasury, having been requested by a committee of the Senate to give his views on the proposition, expressed strong disapproval of the plan. He deemed that there was manifest propriety in a continuance of the existing system; that the change, to use his language, was "calculated to embarrass the operations of this Department in carrying into effect with proper energy the legal means placed in its hands for the security and protection of the revenue." He adds, significantly: "Without intending any disparagement of the officers of the Navy, it is not believed that the habits and discipline of that meritorious class of men are calculated to suit the character of the service to which it is proposed to assign them, especially when they must be subjected to the orders and directions of the collector of the customs, as provided by the ninety-ninth section of the act of 2d of March, 1799, which subjection is deemed highly essential, both for the efficiency of the duties to be discharged and the better security of the interests of the revenue."

Referring to the trial given the employment of naval officers in the service upon revenue vessels, but discontinued in 1832, he says: "After a short trial it was found necessary to discontinue [it] in consequence of the difficulties and objections which occurred in the practical operation of the measure."

The Committee on Commerce of the Senate presented, through Senator Huntington, of Connecticut, an adverse report upon the proposition of 1843 to hand the business over to the Navy Department. I quote from their report some pertinent passages: "The duties required of those who have the command of these [revenue] vessels are such as belong almost exclusively to the enforcement of the revenue laws. Hence it seems to be peculiarly appropriate that those employed in this service should be under the direction and control of the officer who is charged with the execution of the laws relating to customs. *This was the leading feature of the policy which led to the establishment of this branch of the public service.* It has stood the test of time and experience and has 'worked well.' To abandon it for the purpose of trying a new experiment would be at least hazardous, and is not called for by any exigency known to the committee."

They add further on: "The committee are satisfied that sound policy requires that the revenue service and the naval service should be kept distinct; * * * and [the former] under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury."

It is needless to add that the action of the Senate was in accord with the report of the Committee on Commerce. It is observed that Congress has always looked coldly, not to say with displeasure, upon every attempt of the Navy to aggrandize its power by absorbing the functions of civil administration.

Looking back, we find arrayed against this measure Alexander Hamilton, the author of our system of finance, and two other eminent Secretaries of the Treasury—Louis McLane, in 1832, and Walter Forward, in 1843. We have also an unbroken line of Secretaries of the Treasury, from Hamilton to the present time, whose approval of the present arrangement as wise and salutary seems attested by their acquiescence. It remained for a master in the Navy—whose report is appended to the annual report of the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy, and upon the statements of which the latter appears to have based principally his recommendations for the transfer—to discover the incongruities of the system and point out its hidden defects, to teach statecraft to statesmen, to roll back the curtain of time and reveal the errors of judgment of the founders of the Republic.

The Scheme Impracticable and Costly.

The Revenue Marine, which has earned a respectable place in the nation's history, would seem to have rights and be entitled to consideration at the hands of Congress as well as the Navy, yet the proposition is to wipe it out, to sink its history, to place its officers in unequal service with naval officers. If the latter had, with thought and enterprise, and by industry and energy, built up some civil branch in the Navy Department and now sought legal authority for its continuance in the unnatural relation, their demand might seem to have some ground of justice, but to come with bold effrontery and ask Congress to strike down an honorable and efficient branch of the civil establishment in order to benefit naval officers may perhaps be characterized as impudent. It is not often that the national legislature is asked to perpetrate so great a wrong for the benefit of a class already highly favored.

It may be said in passing that the defects of the pending bill are numerous, and that it presents in a most repulsive light the formulation of the proposition conclusively shown to be repugnant to fair-dealing and public justice. The imperfections of the bill are, however, merged in the general objections which surround the whole plan of Navy aggrandizement. Nevertheless were the reasons as strong in favor of the transfer of this branch of the civil service to the Navy Department as they are against it, this bill would still be bad, and its passage be hurtful to the public interest.

A few more words upon the question of economy as involved in the proposed transfer. Should naval officers take the place of the Revenue Marine, the increased pay alone of the corps would be, at a reasonable calculation, \$50,000 a year. Were the officers detailed, all holding commissions more than five years old, the increase would be exactly \$64,000; but if some were newly commissioned, the increase would be correspondingly less.

So far from the change being in the interest of economy, the testimony shows the reverse to be true. The cost of the Service would be largely increased in all the items that enter into the expense of its operation.

But more even than the increased cost of management would be the incapacity of naval officers for the work, their experience and education all tending in a different direction. Moreover, they would never become proficient in the duty. By the rules of the Navy Department governing details of officers, two years is the usual length of an officer's tour or period of service upon a particular duty or station. Following

this rule, a naval officer, after two years' service upon a revenue-cutter, might be expected to go to sea on a naval vessel. If he were subjected to his fair rotation of duty, he would take the rounds of the naval stations, first to one and then to another of the five squadrons maintained by the Navy, designated as the North Atlantic, South Atlantic, Pacific, Asiatic, and Mediterranean. Completing this round, he might be assigned to shore-duty for two years longer, making twelve years in all, when he would be again eligible for assignment to a revenue vessel. His first limited experience would have been forgotten in the *interim*. Under such an arrangement the revenue vessels would soon become subject to the same sad train of collisions, strandings, and other disasters which now beset the naval vessels upon our coast, when, as appears by the information recently furnished Congress, (*vide* Ex. Doc. No. 26, H. R.,) there are in a single year twenty-seven casualties for thirty-two vessels of the Navy in commission. Years of patient and industrious application are necessary to enable the revenue-marine officer to become proficient and skilled in his profession and the duties incident thereto. In the system of shifting details to which naval officers are necessarily subjected, if the service be impartially administered, it would not be possible for such officers to become fitted for the business of revenue officers.

Forty years ago the Senate said that the Revenue Marine had stood the test of time, and "worked well." The same may be now affirmed in still stronger terms.

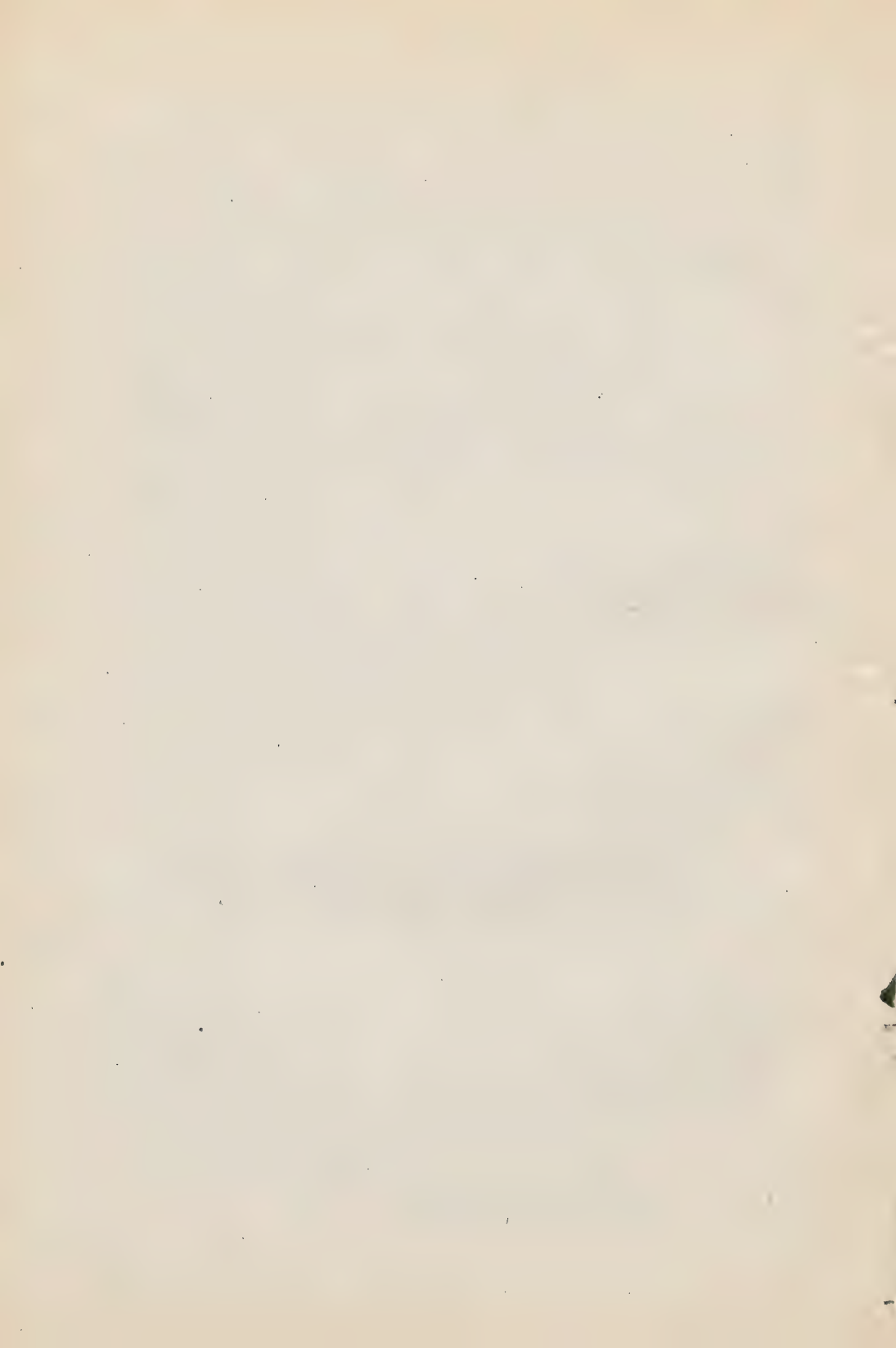
The good condition and efficiency of the Revenue Marine, justice to its officers, its history, its record, demand its retention in the Treasury. The convenience of the public business, the relations of this branch to other civil branches in the Treasury, the natural order, the harmony, the fitness of things, demand its retention. The bad condition of the Navy, the extravagance in the management, the disregard by its officers of law and regulations, their unfitness for the work, forbid the transfer to that Department.

Finally, it may be said that against the scheme of enlarging the scope and power of the Navy Department by endowing it with a great body of civil functions, of which the pending bill is but the entering-wedge, are arrayed all the traditions of the Republic, all the precedents of Congressional action, all considerations of sound public policy. The judgment of our country's founders is against it, the custom and practice of years are against it, the voice of the people is against it.

Very respectfully,

E. W. CLARK,
Chief Revenue-Marine Division.

Hon. CHARLES J. FOLGER,
Secretary of the Treasury.



UNITED STATES COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY.

LETTER OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

ON THE

PROPOSED TRANSFER TO THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY OFFICE,
Washington, January 6, 1883.

SIR: The principal reasons against transferring the Coast-Survey Service from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department must necessarily be those which led, in 1843, to the adoption of the present system of administration, together with the fact that the work has been successfully conducted under the same. These considerations may be briefly stated as follows:

The work is one which requires the co-operation of persons specially trained in geodesy or spherical surveying, in trigonometrical and topographical surveying, in nautical surveying and the science of navigation, beside the employment of mathematical computers, skilled draughtsmen, engravers, mechanics, and other persons of special attainments.

It was believed that an organization composed of such various elements, including civilians, engineer officers of the Army, and officers of the Navy, would be most advantageously placed under a civil department, where all difficulties arising from questions of relative rank and special privilege would disappear. For this reason, and as relating mainly to the commercial interests of the country, the work was placed under the Treasury Department, which has charge of that part of the public service.

It is claimed and admitted that this plan has worked well, and excellently well. The permanent civil nucleus has preserved unity of plan and methods in the work, has fostered its progress and development, and has maintained the necessary strict co-ordination of the survey afloat with that of the shore.

The spare force of the naval and military service has been utilized to advantage. There are not now any officers of the Army employed in the work, because their whole force is needed in improvements of

rivers and harbors. In like manner, at times when the Navy required its whole force for war purposes, not a single naval officer was employed on the Coast Survey. On the contrary, civilians on the work performed duty with the fleets. The case is now reversed, and about fifty naval officers, mostly of lower grades, find useful employment and valuable experience on the Coast Survey. About 250 men are furnished with pay and rations, and the total expenditure on the part of the Navy amounts to about \$250,000 a year, being 30 per cent. of the whole expenditure for the Coast and Geodetic Survey. This is made the ground by the Secretary of the Navy for the claim that the work should be transferred to his Department. It is not claimed that the officers would not be paid, whether on this duty or not. It is possible that the number of enlisted men, although within the whole number allowed for the Navy, might not be employed. We must admit, therefore, that the appropriations for the naval service are increased by the pay and rations for the men employed on the Coast Survey, say, \$92,000 per annum, or less than 15 per cent. of the whole expenditure for the work. This expenditure is necessary, if the work is to be done, whether administered by the Treasury or by the Navy Department.

The leading considerations which I would urge in opposition to the proposed transfer may be summed up in the following propositions:

1. The present system, perfected nearly forty years ago, has proved thoroughly efficient, economical, and satisfactory to the country. It is wise to hold fast to that which has been proved to be good.

2. It affords to the Navy all the advantages that can be legitimately claimed. It employs as many of its officers in service afloat as can be advantageously used in hydrography. The employment of a larger number, in the event of a transfer, would result in training naval officers to be geodesists, topographers, chiefs of technical bureaus, and in withdrawing their interests and habits from the naval service proper.

3. The efficiency of the Service would suffer by the loss of ambition and emulation, which exist at present in a high degree, but which find no stimulus in a service where no positions of responsibility and direction are open to civil experts, however great their attainments and devotion to the public service.

Yours, respectfully,

J. E. HILGARD,

Superintendent Coast and Geodetic Survey.

Hon. CHAS. J. FOLGER,

Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.

U. S. COAST AND GEODETIC SURVEY OFFICE,
Washington, January 20, 1883.

DEAR SIR: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury, dated the 17th instant, addressed to you, in which he transmits, for consideration and such reply as the subject demands, a printed report by Commander Charles D. Sigsbee, U. S. N., received from the Secretary of the Navy, in which certain considerations are presented in favor of the transfer of the Coast and Geodetic Survey from the Treasury to the Navy Department.

For the last forty-seven years the organization of the Coast Survey, composed of civilians and Army and Navy officers, has been under the control of the Secretary of the Treasury, on the ground that the Survey was for commercial purposes, and that only under a neutral Department, or civil chief, could the desired co-operation of the three different branches of the Service be properly secured. In this connection, and for the reason that the past has its lessons, a short synopsis of the history of the Survey would not be out of place.

SYNOPSIS.

At the commencement of the present century the want of accurate charts of our coast was seriously felt. They were absolutely necessary for the encouragement of foreign and domestic commerce. Accordingly, on February 10, 1807, Congress passed a law "to provide for surveying the coast of the United States," the execution of which was left entirely to the President, Thomas Jefferson.

The scientific principles and methods which were recommended by Prof. F. R. Hassler for the conduct of such a survey were adopted by the President and by Albert Gallatin, Secretary of the Treasury, and approved by the leading scientists of the day. The work was at that date naturally assumed to belong to the Treasury Department, and hence Secretary Gallatin, with the approval of the President, appointed Prof. Hassler the Superintendent of the Survey.

Owing to the war with Great Britain and to the condition of the national finances after the war, little progress was made by Prof. Hassler beyond collecting the necessary instruments for the survey and illustrating in the field the methods he had proposed.

In 1818 the law was changed so as to exclude civilians and to confine the execution of the work to Army and Navy officers.

The result was that disconnected surveys were made, and on this subject the Hon. Samuel L. Southard, Secretary of the Navy, in his annual report to Congress, 1827, states, "nor can such surveys be made

without the aid of the means contemplated by the act of 1807, alluding to the employment of scientific persons.

In 1828 the Committee on Naval Affairs addressed a letter to the Secretary of the Navy asking for information in regard to the survey of the coast, and whether such a survey ought to be made.

Secretary Southard replied to the latter inquiry "that upon this point no doubt is entertained," and adds, in regard to the detached surveys made under his Department, "that for the reasons given by me [him] they were unsafe, and in many instances useless and pernicious."

In July, 1832, the law of 1807 was revived, Prof. Hassler was reappointed Superintendent, and the employment of "astronomers and of other persons as the President shall deem necessary" was again authorized.

In March, 1834, the survey was transferred to the Navy Department, and in 1836 was transferred back to the Treasury Department.

In 1843 Congress directed that a board should be organized, to be composed of civilians and Army and Navy officers, whose duty it should be to reorganize the Survey, and that the plan agreed upon by the majority of the board should be carried out by the President of the United States.

The board, consisting of the Superintendent and two of his civil assistants, two experienced naval officers, and four officers of the Topographical Corps of the Army, concurred unanimously, and as a finality, in adopting the following resolution, which was approved by the President:

"Resolved, That inasmuch as the object and purpose of the survey of the coast refer principally to the commercial interests of the country, and as all laws of Congress in relation to the same contemplate the employment of civilians and officers of the Army and Navy upon said works, it is the opinion of this board, and they do hereby respectfully recommend, that it should be under the control and considered a part of the Treasury Department."

Again in 1850 and 1851 the Secretary of the Navy suggested in his annual reports for those years that the Survey be transferred to the Navy Department.

In 1851 the Senate passed a resolution directing the Secretary of the Navy to report to the Senate the reasons why such a transfer should be made, and also the Secretary of the Treasury to report why it should not be made. A report from each Secretary was presented, and both were published by order of Congress.* The subject of the transfer was fully and thoroughly discussed in the Senate and by

* Ex. Docs. 35 and 36, Senate, 2d session, 31st Congress.

the scientific associations and chambers of commerce of the country. The recommendation was not adopted. The reasons against the transfer are stronger now than then.

In 1871 Congress authorized the extension of the triangulation to the interior States as a basis for their State surveys, and also the connection by triangulation of the Atlantic and Pacific coasts.

The report of Commander Sigsbee makes no specific charge against the efficiency, economy, or scientific accuracy with which the Survey has been conducted, nor does it impeach its management or the eminence it has attained in comparison with other national works of the same character.

The transfer has been emphatically opposed by those in our own country who are interested in commerce and in the advancement of science, while abroad the results of the present organization have been most favorably received.

Capt. H. W. Smyth, royal navy, president of the Geographical Society, London, says, in reference to our survey: "I have studied the question closely, and do not hesitate to pronounce the conviction that though the Americans were last in the field, they have, *per saltum*, leaped into the very first rank."

On the same subject Sir R. I. Murchison may be quoted: "The systematic co-operation of able surveyors of the naval and military service, combined with and subordinate to a central system of direction in the Treasury Department, and superintended by astronomers, could not fail to make this (the Coast Survey) one of the most perfect exemplifications of applied science of modern times."

The report refers extensively to the fact that the purely geographical surveys of the coasts of Europe have been executed by naval officers. This is undoubtedly true, but the question arises whether better results would not have been secured by the system of co-operation as it now exists under the Secretary of the Treasury. Admiral Beaufort, R. N., a distinguished hydrographer, and other British authorities state that the progress and character of the hydrography of Great Britain have severely suffered from want of co-operation with the ordnance or land survey.

The proposed transfer, however, carries with it not only the hydrography, but the survey of the coast in the literal sense of the term—that is, the following operations:

GEODESY:

Reconnoissance.

Base-lines and standards of length.

Triangulation and instruments.

Time.

Azimuth.

Latitude.

Longitude.

Arc measures and local deflection of plumb-line.

Geographical positions and projections.

HYPSONOMETRY:

Spirit-levelling.

Trigonometric and barometric heights.

SURVEYING:

Topography.

PHYSICAL HYDROGRAPHY:

Tides, currents, and winds.

Gulf stream.

Deep-sea soundings and temperatures.

TERRESTRIAL MAGNETISM:

Astronomy.

Absolute and differential gravity.

No government in Europe has ever committed such delicate operations to its marine or naval department. This was tried by the United States between 1834 and 1836, and failed, whereas the present organization has been an eminent success. To transfer only the hydrography would be, in the light of the past, an act of disorganization, and in this connection it may be added that since the date of the last similar recommendation by the Secretary of the Navy, thirty-two years ago, a large portion of the needed hydrography has been completed, while, on the other side, the scope of the geodetic work has been extended.

In addition to the above operations, the construction of the standard weights and measures of the United States, being intimately connected with the Survey, has been always under the charge of its Superintendent, and belongs entirely to the Treasury Department. Shall this duty be also transferred? If not, must not a separate bureau, with a specially qualified chief at its head, be established in the Treasury Department for this particular work? Would this be in the line of economy?

Another objection urged against the present organization is, that "naval officers, while attached to the Survey, are independent of the control of the Secretary of the Navy, which is a disadvantage." In reply to this it may be simply stated that the Secretary details these officers; that he can recall them whenever their services are needed

for strictly naval purposes, as has been done heretofore; and that while performing duty in the Survey they are under a chief naval officer, the hydrographic inspector, and are governed by naval regulations. The Chief of the Survey simply assigns them to the localities where the necessary land operations have been finished and the hydrographic work is most needed, exactly as would be the case under the Navy Department.

Before 1861, Army and Navy officers were attached to the Survey. At the breaking out of hostilities some few resigned their commissions, while all the others were recalled to their professional duties. Nevertheless, the Survey was continued in all its branches until the close of the war, principally in special surveys on land and water for the immediate use of the Army and Navy.

The Hydrographic Office of the Navy Department has been comparatively lately established. It is stated in the report as an argument in favor of the transfer that two bureaus of the Government, the Coast Survey and the Hydrographic Office, are publishing duplicate charts. No charts published by the Hydrographic Office are published by the Coast Survey, and if the former finds it advisable to use the regular charts of the coasts of the United States in its different compilations, the duplication is on the part of the Hydrographic Office. Nor can it be seen, even in this case, what difference it would make whether such charts were made under the general authority of the Treasury or of the Navy Department. The hydrographic office of the British board of admiralty republishes all the principal charts issued from this office, and gives it due credit therefor.

The yearly and aggregate amounts appropriated for the Coast and Geodetic Survey are given in the report with considerable prominence, in connection with the expenditures for the same purpose paid from naval appropriations. If the sums appropriated for the Survey are intended as an argument in favor of the transfer, it should be clearly shown that they were injudiciously expended, and that strict economy and accountability have not been practised, or that the work could have been executed more cheaply, more quickly, and with greater precision under the Navy Department.

The survey of the coast, upon comparison, has cost less than similar operations in Europe.*

The Navy, through its officers attached to the survey of the coast, in accordance with the law of Congress, has contributed largely and creditably to the success of the work. Would, however, the employment of ten officers per annum entitle the Navy Department to the

* Ex. Doc. No. 6, Senate, 2d session, 35th Congress.

control of the Coast and Geodetic Survey? Or would the recommendation to that effect be strengthened on the ground that the Department can spare sixty officers to-day and perhaps none to-morrow?

The pay of officers and crews employed on hydrographic duty in the Survey must, whether they are attached to the Survey or not, be paid almost entirely from naval appropriations. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that such payments cover the entire expense of the hydrography. The vessels, over twenty in number, belong to and were built or purchased by the Survey. Their repairs and maintenance, including equipment, instruments, and running expenses, are all paid from the appropriation for the Survey. These expenses amounted in 1882 to about \$80,000.

The advantage to be gained by the transfer in obtaining depots for storage and supplies are somewhat illusory. No "buildings are purchased or rented for depots." The size of the surveying-vessels ranges from fifty to three hundred and fifty tons. So soon as the season is over, many of the smaller class are laid up at the nearest harbor and town until the resumption of operations next season. In this way the expense and risk are saved of a trip to and back from a navy-yard or naval depot.

The organization of the civil staff, which is limited in number, and, in fact, is being gradually reduced, is, and ever has been, based on merit. No one can be admitted except to the lowest grade, that of aid, and then only when the applicant is a graduate of a college or of some scientific school, and after passing a satisfactory examination at the office. Promotion or increase of pay depends solely on merit, or the amount and excellence of the work executed, and not upon seniority. Such a civil organization, in combination with Army and Navy officers detailed for the Survey from time to time, and for comparatively short periods, has produced unequalled results.

Whether the transfer of the Coast and Geodetic Survey, the great national scientific work of the country, from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department would increase its efficiency, or insure greater economy and progress, or improve its management, or give a higher value to its results, or better satisfy the demands of commerce and science, or, finally, add to the reputation of the Survey at home or abroad, is a question which may be safely left to the same tribunals which decided it in 1807, 1832, 1843, and 1851.

Yours, respectfully,

RICH'D D. CUTTS,

Assistant in Charge of Office and Topography.

J. E. HILGARD,

Superintendent U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey.

MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE.

TRANSFER TO NAVY DEPARTMENT.

REPORT OF THE SUPERVISING-SURGEON GENERAL.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,
UNITED STATES MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
Washington, January 5, 1883.

"Is it not the man-of-war's man's way
To take all things, but nought to pay?"

Dugald Graham.

SIR: Referring to your reference to the annual report of the Secretary of the Navy, and of the bills (H. R. Nos. 7157 and 7158) for the transfer of certain duties from the Secretary of the Treasury to the Navy Department, and particularly so far as this office is affected thereby, I have to respectfully report that no officer or employé of this Service would be transferred to the Navy Department by the bill (H. R. No. 7157) entitled "An act to transfer the administration of the Revenue-Cutter Service to the Navy Department;" but there would be a diversion from the marine-hospital fund of the amount of forty cents per month which is now paid by each officer and employé of that Service.

As regards the bill (H. R. No. 7158) to establish a Bureau of Mercantile Marine in the Navy Department, it is believed that its provisions would transfer this Service to the Navy Department, as in section 1 it is stated that "from and after the passage of this act, the Secretary of the Navy shall have charge and supervision of the execution of *all* laws relating to the mercantile marine of the United States." This clause seems to be independent of that which follows, and which states: "And shall exercise all the powers and perform all the duties that are now by law or by custom exercised or performed by the Secretary of the Treasury in relation to the registry, enrolment, and license of

vessels, the regulation of steam-vessels, and the shipment of seamen," &c. The next clause excepts the accounting officers of the Treasury Department from the transfer. Section 4 provides that the chief of the proposed Bureau of Mercantile Marine "shall perform, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, all executive duties relating to the mercantile marine which are or which may be hereafter placed under the supervision of the Navy Department." If it be construed that the first clause of section 1 of this bill does not necessarily transfer this Service to the Navy Department, I would still deem it my duty to lay before you certain facts in relation to the transfer of the Service aforesaid, for the bill can only be explained by the printed recommendation of the Secretary of the Navy in his last annual report, and I cannot, therefore, view the transfer of kindred services to that Department without concern, believing it to be the entering-wedge by which all branches of the civil service are eventually to be placed under the control of the Military Establishment of the United States. From the foundation of this Government there has seemed to be a desire on the part of that Establishment to absorb and administer all the civil offices of the Government. It is but a short time since that bills were introduced into the House to transfer the Consular Bureau of the Department of State and the direction of the consuls to the Navy Department, the consuls themselves to be detailed from the Navy. In the year 1862 a determined and persistent effort was made by the Navy Department to absorb the Light-House Service, which was only defeated by a report of that Board setting forth the facts. The report itself is Senate Miscellaneous Document No. 61, 37th Congress, 2d session. Later I find that an attempt was made to assume executive direction of the Life-Saving Service—in the year 1878. At the last session of Congress the Revenue-Marine Service was attacked, and the bill (H. R. No. 7157) for the first time formulates their proposition. It had been recommended in 1843. The medical officers of the Navy had expressed their desire to obtain control of the marine hospitals. Some even volunteered to serve as detailed officers in this Service, apparently thinking thereby to obtain a foothold, and now they openly recommend the transfer of this Service to that Department. I propose, briefly, to show what a transfer means, and, having thus stated the general disposition and desire of the Navy Department to control the civil service, I deem it unnecessary to further advert to that topic.

In examining the question of the proposed transfer, it is necessary to glance at the history of the Service. I find that the Marine-

Hospital Service of the United States originated in a petition to Congress by the Marine Society of Boston, Mass., in the year 1791, but, although favorably reported at that time, the law was not passed until July 16, 1798. There was then no thought of this Service belonging to the Navy. It was created on the petition prepared and signed by men whose sole interest was in the commercial marine of the United States, and it was for their benefit alone. A year later we find the act of 1799 extending the benefits of the original act to the Navy. This was done at the request, and upon the recommendation, of the Executive Department. Medical officers of the Navy were not detailed to serve in marine hospitals, but a civilian appointment was made, and civilian appointments have continued to be made to fill vacancies in the marine hospitals from the foundation of the Service down to the present time. In the year 1811 the Secretary of the Navy recommended the separation of the two services, it being stated that the Navy desired their own hospitals; that they desired to be separate and distinct from merchant seamen. Naval seamen, when placed in marine hospitals, frequently deserted, and it was thought it would be desirable to employ the wives and widows of seamen in the Navy as attendants in the hospitals. A law was then passed separating the establishments. It was not claimed that the several marine hospitals should be transferred to the Navy. There was at that time a healthy public opinion which would have disposed of any such movement. Although the law was passed so early, yet no naval hospital was actually built until the year 1827, and naval seamen were treated in the hospitals of the Marine-Hospital Service of the United States. During the period of the war with Great Britain in 1812, the marine hospital at Charlestown, Mass., Boston harbor, was filled to its utmost capacity with British prisoners and seamen from the Navy of the United States, in addition to the sick of the merchant service. Notwithstanding this, the hospital was directed and controlled by civil officers. The surgeon of the hospital, Dr. David Townsend, received his appointment in 1809, and remained in his capacity of resident surgeon until 1829, when he died, in office. There has never been any complaint that the hospitals were inefficiently managed, except for a short period just following the war of the rebellion, when the interior commercial marine was at its lowest ebb. I find upon examination that there are naval hospitals in connection with each navy-yard, but there are none on the interior rivers of the United States. These hospitals have been located with especial reference to the wants of the seamen and employés of the navy-yards,

and not with reference to the commercial marine. Before going into a comparison of the respective services I desire to invite your attention to the fact that in the last annual report of the Secretary of the Navy he says:

“If it should be deemed advisable to establish a Bureau of Mercantile Marine in the Navy Department, [which the bill H. R. No. 7158 attempts to do,] the Marine and Naval Hospital Services would naturally be united. Obviously the Department with which the Service is naturally associated is the Navy Department—a Department which now has the physical care of 8,250 seamen—a Department to which the Service is akin, to which it is of the greatest importance to foster, by every means at its command, that very class whom the Service is designed to relieve, and in which there is a bureau specially charged with the care and comfort of seafaring men. Valuable facts and statistics upon the subject of marine and naval hospitals have been collected and arranged by Midshipman Philip R. Alger, and are herewith transmitted.”

I have tried vainly to obtain a copy of the valuable facts and statistics which have been arranged by Midshipman Philip R. Alger, a letter of the Secretary of the Treasury to the Secretary of the Navy having failed to bring the document up to this date, and on two separate occasions I sent to the chief clerk of the Navy Department requesting a copy of the report. I presume the report of this midshipman on hospital service was not purposely withheld; but it is certainly a hardship that the bureaus affected by this bill and by the declarations of the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy have not been able, except in a single instance, to see the reports prepared upon them by naval officers, and to which they have had no opportunity to make a single statement in explanation or remark of any kind.

I pass over this part of the subject, and shall not at this time make an inquiry into the reason for the detail of a midshipman to report on hospitals—a subject which, at first blush, would seem to be somewhat foreign to the regular duties of a midshipman. I presume, however, that the Honorable Secretary has taken pains to ascertain that the particular midshipman referred to was an expert in medical knowledge and hospital construction, and in all details relating to hospitals in general. Not having access to this report, as before mentioned, it is obvious that this letter cannot, in any sense, be considered a reply to it; but as it is stated that the statistics have been collected and arranged from the published reports, &c., I shall avail myself of such public reports as are accessible to me.

I find by the last report of the Surgeon-General of the Navy, which is contained in volume 6, 1880, page 11, that there were admitted to *all* the naval hospitals during the year 1,236 persons. As the force of

the Navy during that year was the same as in subsequent years, or nearly so, it may fairly be taken as a sample of the amount of business done at those hospitals. There are eight hospitals, namely: Annapolis, Brooklyn, Chelsea, Mare Island, Norfolk, Pensacola, Philadelphia, and Portsmouth, N. H. There is also a hospital at Yokohama, Japan, which I presume is included in the estimate of seamen treated in hospitals. The Secretary of the Navy states that there are 8,250 men subject to treatment in the Navy, and therefore the services should be united under the care of a bureau in that Department. It cannot be that the Secretary of the Navy supposes that there is a larger clientelage subject to treatment in naval hospitals than there is in marine hospitals, for it is well known that there are about 165,000 men subject to admission to the marine hospitals; at least that is the number of men paying hospital-dues. There were actually treated by the Marine-Hospital Service in the last fiscal year 36,184 patients, of whom 13,048 were treated in the marine hospitals; so that either the Secretary of the Navy has been misinformed as to the relative importance of the services, or he must consider that the care and comfort of a single naval sailor is equal to nearly thirty sailors who do not wear the naval uniform. Is it possible that in America we have a chief officer of the Government openly favoring a special class—in effect saying that the buttons, the trappings, and the other things “that doth hedge” a man in the service of his Government makes that man more an object of care and solicitude than thirty common men who are not naval sailors? It seems to me that this is subversive of all the principles of republicanism and true democracy, or of government by the people. “Obviously,” says the Secretary, “the service should be in that Department which now has the care of 8,250 men.” The Secretary of the Treasury might say, with much greater propriety, “obviously the little force that is now treated in naval hospitals might be treated in the Treasury hospitals, which have under their care 165,000 men.” But I shall not extend this letter to an undue length by pursuing this topic, but desire to touch upon its economical bearings. Admitting that none of the patients mentioned in this report of the Surgeon-General of the Navy has ever been treated in the hospital at Yokohama, the 1,236 men were treated at a cost of—what? We find in the estimates for hospitals, made by the Surgeon-General in that year, (Report, page 6,) \$181,500 is recommended for the care of the service; \$45,000 only of this sum is for the medical department in general, which, it is stated, is for surgeons’ necessities, for vessels in commission, navy-yards, naval stations,

Marine Corps, and Coast Survey. This, then, leaves a balance of \$136,500 for the support of the 1,236 men treated at the naval hospitals of the United States. It should be remembered, however, that the salary of the medical officers is not included in the above, mileage for medical officers travelling under orders is not included, and it is impossible from any published report to ascertain the exact cost of the medical establishment of the Navy, the pay being included under the general term of pay of the Navy, travelling expenses under that of mileage for the Navy. We shall find thus that each person treated in naval hospitals has cost the Government \$110.43, exclusive of the salary and emoluments of the large and expensive medical staff of the Navy. The expense of the persons treated in the Marine-Hospital Service of the United States for the same year was \$16.80 per man. It cannot be, then, that this transfer is recommended on the score of economy. It must surely have been, as before suggested, that it was supposed the Government was more interested in the care of one naval sailor than it was in the thirty who are not in the naval service. If there are more medical officers in the Navy than can be given employment, why not discharge some of them, as would be done in the civil service? Is it possible that the "aristocratic" element in this country, fostered and pampered by annual appropriations, must be provided with employment at the expense of all other people? I will only point to one fact. At the marine hospital at Chelsea, Mass., when I served there some years ago, we had in our hospital a daily average of from thirty to fifty patients. At the same time we had a dispensary at the custom-house in Boston. We had, to manage this hospital and dispensary, one surgeon, (myself,) one assistant surgeon, and eight attendants of all sorts. At the same time at the foot of the hill was a naval hospital. They had, at the time I visited them, ten (10) patients. They had a steward and some eight or ten civilian employés, one medical director, (with the rank of captain,) a surgeon, a passed assistant surgeon, and an assistant surgeon. They had no dispensary in the city or any other duties than those performed at the hospital. It is evident that the transfer of the patients of the naval hospital to the marine hospital would not have materially added to our work. In this office, for example, under the law one surgeon of the Service is detailed to serve as a member of the National Board of Health, an institution of whose utility I will not now speak; but that is the law, and the officer is so detailed. In order that this Service should suffer no loss, that officer has been assigned to duty as chief of the purveying division of this office, and

is kept constantly employed. The acting chief clerk of the office is a medical officer detailed from the general service. He daily visits patients of this Service at Providence Hospital, averaging from five to fifteen per day, attends to patients at the dispensary, in addition to the duty of supervising the clerical force of the office. There is in the Navy Department one medical director detailed to serve as a member of the National Board of Health, who performs no other duties. One surgeon is detailed to serve in the Smithsonian Institution, a medical officer detailed in charge of records and files of the Navy Department, three or four medical officers are detailed to investigate various subjects connected with hygiene at the naval laboratory in this city. I do not know how many other medical officers of the Navy are on duty in this city at the present time. There are, however, a sufficient number to organize and maintain a flourishing medical society, of which society Medical Director — — is president. There is also a board of medical officers detailed as a permanent board to examine applicants for admission into the Navy. They remain on duty during the entire year, and, so far as the public is advised, they perform no other duty. In the Marine-Hospital Service, on the contrary, a board of examiners is ordered when there are vacancies to fill, and open competition is held for all appointments. The examining board remains in session a week, and when their duties are finished the officers composing it resume their stations and their usual duties. These facts are mentioned as probable *addenda* to Midshipman Alger's statistics.

The conclusion to be drawn from these facts would indicate that the proper policy of the Government, in case sentiments of pity prevent the discharge of supernumeraries, would be to stop appointments in the medical corps of the Navy until it shall have been brought down to a working basis.

Finally, I desire to submit the fact that, so far as known, the marine hospitals are economically and properly managed, and the sailors are skilfully and carefully treated by the officers having charge over them. There is no special provision of nature by which the medical officers of the Navy have a monopoly of scientific knowledge, or an essential and inborn right to have charge of sickness occurring among steamboatmen and other sailors. It is not presumed that the common sailors entering hospitals ought to be subjected to the rigors of naval discipline, or that they should be put to bed at the point of the bayonet, and there is, therefore, no reason why the military should have especial and peculiar charge of this matter.

In conclusion, permit me to invite your attention to the fact, con-

clusive in itself, that the Service has extensive operations in a region where no naval vessel ever floats—the interior waters of the United States—the Mississippi from its mouth to its source, the Missouri from its mouth to its source, and the Columbia river, on the Pacific coast, and the various tributaries thereof; also the Hudson river above tide-water, and the additional fact that during the war of the rebellion every marine hospital in the possession of the Government was utilized by such of the sick and wounded of the volunteer forces of the Union as could bear transportation without prejudice and with convenience. This shows that landsmen as well as sailors are treated in these hospitals in emergency, and gives an additional reason why the claim of the Navy to the exclusive right to manage the Service is without foundation.

I have no desire to treat any portion of this matter with undue levity, or in a manner unbecoming the gravity of the case. On the contrary, if the facts presented have seemed ridiculous, it is in the nature of the facts themselves, and it is simply by presentation in this way that the absurdity of such a recommendation as that of the Secretary of the Navy becomes apparent to every man ever reared on American soil, and in whom is instilled the principles of a freeman.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. HAMILTON,

Supervising Surgeon-General.

Hon. CHAS. J. FOLGER,

Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE SUPERVISING SURGEON-GENERAL,
UNITED STATES MARINE-HOSPITAL SERVICE,
Washington, January 11, 1883.

SIR: Referring to my previous letter relative to House bill No. 7158, establishing a Bureau of Mercantile Marine, and particularly to the recommendations of the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy in regard to the same, I have to respectfully suggest for consideration the following proposition:

That the Treasury Department has already the machinery for carrying into effect most of the suggestions of the Secretary of the Navy, which are embodied in the bill referred to.

I suggest, if it be deemed expedient so to do, that the commercial bureaus and divisions of the Treasury Department be reorganized so

that they shall all fall under the general supervision of one Assistant Secretary. Then quarterly or monthly meetings of the bureaus could be held in the office of the Assistant Secretary, who should preside. Such questions as would seem to be for the further interests of the commercial marine in this country could then be carefully considered, and finally, after adoption, embodied in the report of the Secretary. No authority of law would be needed, for the Secretary already has abundant authority to call on his bureau officers for an opinion or report. The bureaus of the Merchant Marine under the supervision of the Secretary are—

1. The Light-House Establishment.
2. The Coast Survey.
3. The Bureau of Statistics.
4. The Steamboat-Inspection Service.
5. The Life-Saving Service.
6. The Marine-Hospital Service.

The divisions coming under the rule would be Revenue-Marine division, and Tonnage and Navigation division.

If the amendment to the shipping bill passed on yesterday becomes a law, it will be necessary that some bureau or division be specially charged with the instructions to collectors relative to the shipment and discharge of seamen. This office has heretofore made recommendations in regard to shipment and discharge of seamen, some of which were incorporated as amendments into the bill on this subject.

The plan here proposed would involve no expense to the Government, except the mere printing of an additional circular of reorganization of the Department.

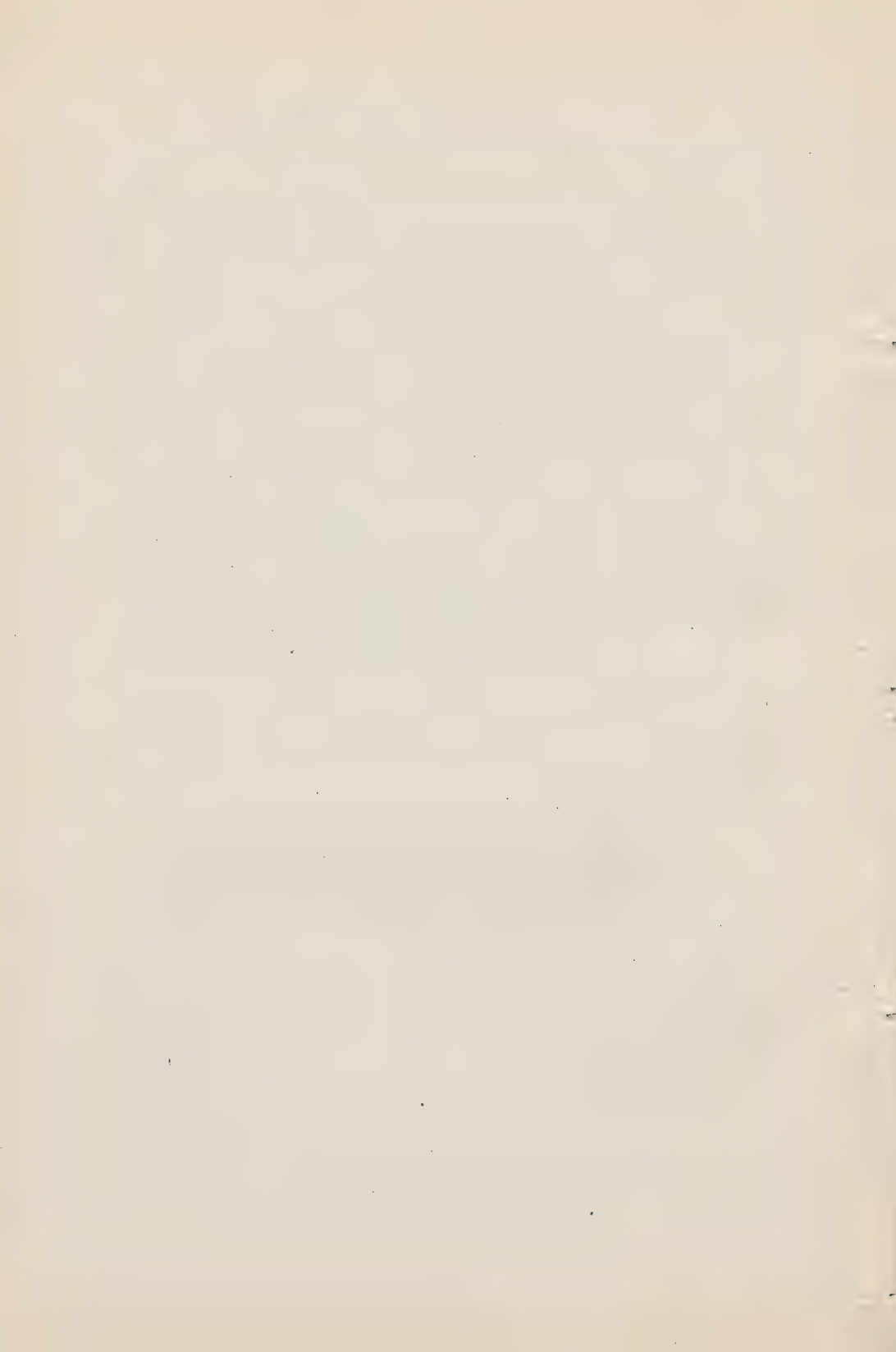
Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN B. HAMILTON,

Surgeon-General, M. H. S.

HON. CHAS. J. FOLGER,

Secretary of the Treasury.



LIFE-SAVING SERVICE.

TRANSFER TO NAVY DEPARTMENT.

REPORT OF THE GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF GENERAL SUPERINTENDENT
UNITED STATES LIFE-SAVING SERVICE,
Washington, D. C., January 20, 1883.

SIR: I have the honor to request your attention to a part of the report of the Honorable the Secretary of the Navy in which, recommending the transfer of the Revenue Marine to the Navy Department, he regards the transfer of the Life-Saving Service as logically sequent upon that of the service first named, and a measure in itself highly desirable, although desirable, as he would seem to admit, simply on the ground of utilizing the large surplus of idle naval officers.

It appears proper for me to remark, as one officially interested in this proposition, and as having had a long and intimate experience in life-saving matters, that it would probably be extremely difficult, not to say impossible, to find another reason for the transfer than that so frankly suggested by the Secretary of the Navy. The attempt to transfer the Service was made, and vigorously made, in 1878, and it is certain that at that time neither in Congress, nor by the press, nor by the advocates of the measure was there a single fact produced in its support, nor even a single argument that was not shown to rest upon the merest figments. The nearest approach to an even plausible reason for the change at that time, appealed to the vague idea entertained by many, that the Life-Saving Service and the Navy were in natural affinity, inasmuch as both had dealings with the sea, and advanced the assumption that a surf-fisherman and a man-of-war's-man were of the same professional species, both, it was said, being used to the management of boats, and therefore, it was argued, equally competent to head a life-boat to the rescue. But all this, which constituted the gravamen of whatever argument could be adduced at that time, was even absurdly untrue. It was forgotten at the outset that the surf and the sea indicate two distinct varieties of action in ocean water, and that the navy sailor, masterful over the long undulations of the deep, even in the stress of the ocean storm, as the mid-

sea cruises of the *Huron* illustrate, is powerless in the fierce cataracts of the breakers on a lee shore, as the loss of the *Huron* illustrates. It was also forgotten, or not noted at that time by the advocates of the transfer, that this very case of the wreck of the *Huron* on the coast of North Carolina carried with it the suggestion of the essential distinction between surfmen and sailors, a distinction which will forever practically prevent their respective functions from being made interchangeable. There was on board the unfortunate vessel a balsa, or life-saving raft, such as was then at many of the life-saving stations, capable of being used like a surf-boat, though probably inferior thereto in efficiency. Had there been among the sailors of the *Huron* a single superb surf-fisherman from the coast before them, it is beyond question that, with such an appliance in his control, he would have carried a line from the vessel to the shore, established the requisite communication, and saved every soul on board. Yet of all the able sailors in the crew there was not a man to do this, although the storm was not extraordinary, nor the surf beyond the skill of surfing men to ride. Of all the gallant company, officers and men, on board the vessel, matchless in their ability to man a ship's boat for a rescue in any sea in which a boat could live, so that it be only in mid-ocean, there were but two that even dared the task, at which a surfman would have smiled, of carrying that balsa with a line through the breakers for the sake of their comrades. How little competency for the task their desperate courage gave them was shown by the sequel. Capsized repeatedly, torn again and again from their hold upon the upset appliance they could not manage, they were flung at last upon the beach without it, half-drowned, and having failed to bring ashore the line, which was the last hope of their shipmates. How differently surfmen, either on ship or shore, could have done in such an emergency is shown by the case of the sloop-of-war *Kansas*, at Greytown, Nicaragua, in April, 1872, where, after four boats, containing thirty-eight men, had been successively capsized in fine weather, broad day-light, and an ordinary surf, in the endeavor to land, and two of the officers and four of the men had been drowned, the natives rowed out in their common boats through the breakers, and saved the remainder. But the natives were surfmen and those they rescued were sailors. The difference is essential; surf is not sea, nor is the mastership in floating among breakers shown by surf-fishermen, shared in any measure by men-of-war's-men. The practical tasks of coast rescues cannot, therefore, be equally discharged by the Life-Saving Service and the Navy. *Per contra* to such dashes at argument and such scant show of reasons as were made by the advocates of the transfer in

1878. it was shown then that in every country in the world and in every age, from China in her antiquity to the last century in Europe, when occidental coast rescues by system began, the life-saving had been a civil service in its inception, the only example to the contrary being in Russia, where the navy started life-boat work, but soon handed it over to civilians as being beyond the naval province. It was also shown that with the single exception of a cork life-belt, got up by an English naval officer, all the life-saving appliances in this and every other country—life-boat, surf-boat, life-car, breeches-buoy, wreck-gun, boat-carriage, line-rocket, Coston light, life-boat compass, and everything else—were invented or devised outside of the navy or navy inspirations. In short, it was shown in the debate of 1878 that the entire modern life-saving system in its history, development, *modus operandi*, and aims, bore no relation to the particular creative energy which produces navies.

The case has not grown better, but worse, since 1878 for the advocates of transfer. The Navy comes into court through its most skilful, most adroit, and able advocate, the Secretary, who descants with earnest eloquence upon the melancholy ruin presented at this time by naval affairs, and pleads for several provinces of civil service to add to this dilapidated empire. It is Scripture precept that only those who have been faithful over a few things should be made rulers over many things; and it is not easy to see why, on general grounds, hands that have brought a small Navy to the condition the Secretary so eloquently deplores, should be intrusted with the further government of large departments of public affairs, to be wrested, moreover, for their use from the civil service. Is it a rule in public prudence that officers who have brought the Navy to confusion and decay are thereby qualified to try their skill upon the Treasury? To add to the initial grotesqueness of the proposition, it must be considered that the Life-Saving Service, like others of the Treasury bureaus to be swept into this naval annex, has attained, under the careful nurture of Congress, a perfection of organization and a degree of efficiency which have won for it the respect and admiration of the country and of foreign nations; that the large result of its protection to surf-imperilled life and marine property is effected by an annual expenditure less than the frequent cost of putting the engines into a single naval vessel; that the valor and sea-craft of its crews make the seaboard ring year after year with great exploits of rescue, and invest it in the public regard with passionate and romantic interest; and that all this has been effected wholly and solely by civilians under civil management, and through

the labor of ten years, without the slightest aid or furtherance from a single member of the military marine. Because a service has grown useful and splendid under the management of the Treasury is a sorry reason for transferring it to the Navy, where the result of the management, according to the report of the Secretary, has been neither useful nor splendid.

Among the numerous reasons why the proposed transfer should not be made, the following appear to me decisive:

1. Because it involves the revolutionary innovation, contrary to the spirit of our Government and the traditions of our past, of enlarging the military establishment by giving it control over civil interests. The Navy is simply the national military marine, a defence in war, a reserve of martial power in peace. Naturally unrepublican through its rigorous discipline, its requirement of unquestioning obedience, and its habit of absolute domination—doubly so from its exotic character, being an imitation of the British navy, which is an organic outgrowth of the feudal monarchy—it might prove a dangerous enemy to the public liberty if elevated from its useful subordination as a military arm of the nation to practical control of the civil service of the country, of which the proposed transfer would be the beginning.

2. The transfer would be objectionable because it is absolutely essential to the success of our life-saving system, which rests upon the skill and experience of professional experts, grown gray in the problems and labors of salvage, that the service should remain uninfluenced by politics in the choice of its agents, and not come under the operation of agencies which have long made the management of navy-yards a public scandal. It is a matter of proud record, and the fact is known to Congress and the country, that never, under whatever pressure, did the officers in immediate charge of the service, nor the succession of Secretaries of the Treasury who sustained them, allow the Life-Saving Service to be used as a political machine. This status it is both desirable and necessary to keep, and there is no reason to suppose it would be kept under the management of the Navy.

3. Another cardinal reason against the proposed transfer is in the impossibility of fusing in any unity of action our beachmen with naval officers and men-of-war's-men. The ways of the coast population are not the ways of the men of the Navy. The coastmen, from whose numbers are now formed the life-saving crews, are free, proud, averse to any but strictly reasonable discipline, and have the truly American hatred of masters. They would never submit to serve under the iron rule which naturally issues from the despotic habitudes of military officers, whether of the army or marine. This is shown by the care

with which they keep out of the Navy, although often forced by poverty to go upon the sea or lakes as sailors in the merchant service. The existing incompatibility could only have the result of their vacating the stations in a body when brought under Navy methods of government. The resort would then be to fill the stations with Navy sailors as keepers and crews. It is not necessary to advert to the universal discord which the presence of this foreign body upon the coast would occasion and keep alive with diabolic energy. But it has already been shown that Navy sailors are not surfmen, and life-boat and surf-boat work would necessarily fall into singular hands for its performance. Furthermore, what has not yet been dwelt upon, the Life-Saving Service is mainly a land service, though having an important function in the broken water of the bars and beaches, and as such is alien to the training and habitudes of men who spend most of their lives on men-of-war in foreign ports or in mid-ocean. The long and wearisome work of the patrols, the incessant marching and counter-marching all night long upon the winter beaches, on the watch for endangered vessels, which forms the constant duty of the life-saving crews, is entirely foreign to the customary duties of sailors. The Life-Saving Service is also mainly a land service in the fact that a large part of its life-saving operations are conducted upon the beach by methods in part peculiar to professional surfmen and wreckers, and in part to trained United States life-savers. These operations involve wreck gunnery, the art of firing lines over distant and unsteady hulls wallowing in the breakers; involve the deft setting up of hawsers and hauling-lines, and their skilful manipulation, to bring in safely numbers of people in peril on breaking decks; and afterwards in many instances involve the release of wrecks from bars where they have stranded, and from the rending action of the surf, and their deliverance, afloat and safe, into the hands of masters and owners. All this is also entirely foreign to the knowledge or the habits of employment of the *personnel* of frigates, into whose hands, however, in the event of transfer to the Navy, the stations and station-work would inevitably fall. The result would also be inevitable. Shorn of the veteran surfing science and life-saving knowledge and experience of the present race of beachmen, the Life-Saving Service would suffer a sea-change into a non-descript condition, the immediate prelude to decadence and ruin.

I have the honor to be, very respectfully,

S. I. KIMBALL,

General Superintendent.

HON. CHAS. J. FOLGER,

Secretary of the Treasury, Washington, D. C.

STEAMBOAT-INSPECTION SERVICE.

TRANSFER TO NAVY DEPARTMENT.

REPORT OF THE SUPERVISING INSPECTOR-GENERAL.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE SUP'G INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF STEAMBOATS,
Washington, D. C., January 12, 1883.

SIR: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your note of the 12th ultimo, in which you call my attention to pages 37 to 39 of the report of the Secretary of the Navy for the present year, and that you "wish to be informed if I agree with the arguments there made, or, if not, that I should present my reasons for disagreement."

In reply thereto, I have the honor to report that I have carefully read the report of the Hon. Secretary of the Navy, and particularly that portion thereof contained in pages 37 to 39, inclusive, pertaining to the transfer of the administration of the steamboat laws from the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Treasury to that of the Secretary of the Navy.

In reply to the note sent me, I desire to say that I disagree very decidedly with the arguments offered by the Hon. Secretary of the Navy. My reasons for disagreement are—

First, "*pro bono publico*," it being repugnant to the sense of the American people to intrust the administration of the civil laws of the country to an armed branch of the Government, supported and maintained for war purposes only. Even in monarchical Great Britain the execution of laws governing commerce is intrusted to civilian officers, known as the "British Board of Trade," and it is the opinion of this office that if a serious proposition should be made there to transfer the duties of the board to the jurisdiction of naval officers, as has been done in the report of the American Secretary of the Navy, it would create a commotion little short of revolution.

My second objection is because one of the reasons given for the proposed change is an undeserved slur upon the boiler-inspectors of the Steamboat-Inspection Service, contained in that part of the Secretary's report quoted as follows, the objectionable words being under-

scored: "The inspection of steam-vessels * * * also finds a place in the Treasury Department, with whose ordinary functions it has no connection whatever, *while there exists in another Department a body of officers, the naval engineers, whose daily occupation fits them directly for such inspection duty.*"

The assumption of the superiority of naval engineers as inspectors of steam boilers and machinery over the civilian officers now performing that duty is an assumption which cannot be sustained by a single fact. Admitting on the part of the naval officers perhaps superior educational, theoretical, and technical knowledge, the inspection of boilers and machinery is a practical operation requiring practical knowledge and experience in the use thereof, qualities in which the naval officers are altogether the inferiors of the present civilian boiler-inspectors; and, to speak comparatively, I do not hesitate to say that in this respect the latter-named officers are at least twenty to one the superiors of the former.

The practical experience of naval engineers with boilers and machinery would be the sum of their experience on sea-duty. In order that an exact comparison between the naval and civil officers in this respect might appear in this report, at my request the following letter was sent to the Secretary of the Navy:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D. C., December 13, 1882.

SIR: Will you please furnish, for the information of this Department, the number of steam-vessels of the U. S. Navy now in commission, the number of engineer officers employed thereon, also the total number of such officers, and their average record of service on board ship.

Very respectfully,
CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary.

Hon. W. E. CHANDLER,
Secretary of the Navy.

Having waited a full month without any reply to the above letter, and in default of the official data asked for, I shall have to depend, for the purpose of my argument, upon data obtained from such sources as have been open to me to determine, approximately, the experience of naval engineers for comparison with that of the officers of this service.

There are, as reported by the Secretary of the Navy, but thirty-eight (38) available cruising-ships in the Navy, thirty-one of which are in commission, with about three hundred (300) engineers to care for their engines and boilers. It would be safe to say that the aver-

age number of vessels that these officers would have experience upon in a lifetime would not exceed six (6) vessels, alternating as such officers do between sea and shore duty. In the Steamboat-Inspection Service there are thirty-seven (37) local inspectors of boilers. The experience of these thirty-seven officers now in the service, compiled from official data, is as follows:

Whole number of boilers inspected at annual inspections, (no account being made of intermediate inspections,) sixty-one thousand seven hundred and eight, (61,708;) total *years'* service as boiler inspectors, three hundred and forty-three, (343;) number of *years'* service and experience as engineers, boiler-makers, and machinists, eight hundred and seventy-two, (872;) average number of boilers inspected by each officer, sixteen hundred and sixty-seven, (1,667;) average term in office of each inspector, nine (9) years, three (3) months, and fifteen (15) days; average number of years' experience in their profession previous to their present appointment, twenty-three (23) years and seven (7) months.

Of the boilers inspected by these officers, only one boiler in each thousand has met with accidents involving loss of life, and it is believed that in every case of accident such accident occurred a considerable time after inspection.

Comparing the above statement of the present condition of the Service with the fact that of the one thousand six hundred and fifty-six (1,656) steamers running on the western rivers up to 1849, just previous to the enactment of the first steamboat laws, one hundred and sixty-eight (168) of them were destroyed by explosions of boilers alone, and with the further fact that these laws *have been administered under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury*, ought to forcibly present to those who suggest, and to Congress, which will have to consider the subject, the familiar adage, "never to trade horses while crossing a stream," to which might be added a new one, as follows: "Never trade a good horse, however ungainly, for a *pretty* one whose good qualities have never been proven."

The Hon. Secretary of the Navy says, further, that "it is believed that a reorganization of the service (and transfer to his Department) such as is suggested, while it would strengthen the merchant marine, would incidentally benefit the Navy."

"It goes without saying" that to benefit the merchant marine is a most commendable object, but it is difficult to see how the Navy Department, if conducted in the future as it has been in the past, on the theoretical views and extravagant practices of naval officers, will accomplish any good to the Merchant-Marine Service.

It would be more reasonable to believe that to apply the theories and practices of the Navy to it would destroy all that there is left of the merchant marine of the country.

What the practice of the Navy would be may be inferred from citing the fact obtained from the last annual report of the Secretary, wherein he shows that the cost of repairs, for *labor* and *material* only, on the thirty-eight available vessels of the Navy was two millions nine hundred and twenty-eight thousand three hundred and nineteen dollars and sixty-one cents, (\$2,928,319.61,) or an average for each vessel of seventy-seven thousand and sixty-three dollars, (\$77,063.)

I respectfully assert that to compel the merchant marine to a proportionate extravagance would bankrupt every owner of a merchant steamer in the United States.

It is but just to say that the Secretary of the Navy himself deems these expenditures extravagant. Therefore, it is my opinion that, before asking to have his duties increased, he should purge the service over which he has now full control, of its many gross evils.

It is as much to the honor of the United States that its Navy should be respectable in the number of its ships as it is in its *personnel*, now having "the enormous disproportion of 1,817 naval officers to 31 vessels in commission, being 59 officers to each ship."

I trust, therefore, that it will not be inappropriate on my part, as I am but following an illustrious example, if I should, although having no connection therewith, advise the Navy Department of a method by which it could, in a few years, become respectable in the number of its ships as it now is in its *personnel*—a method more likely to succeed than the present proposition of the honorable head of that Department; and that is, for Congress to enact a law placing the officers of the Steamboat-Inspection Service in charge of the construction and repairs of naval vessels under the direction of the *Secretary of the Treasury*.

If that were done, with the superior practical knowledge of such repairs, possessed by the steamboat-inspectors, I am sure that at least 75 per cent. of the money now extravagantly expended in carrying out theories would be saved—a sum sufficient to add to the Navy a new ship annually, with all her armament on board; and I am sure, with such evidence of economy before it, Congress would willingly vote money to build a duplicate each year, so that in a few years we would have a Navy equal to any in the world.

Another strong objection to the proposed change from the Treasury to the Navy Department is, that it would subject licensed officers of

steam-vessels to a technical and impractical examination that a large number of them could not pass, though having superior practical qualifications for the profession they have been following, and having in the past, largely contributed to the support of the inspection service.

Officers of the Navy are frequently aristocratic and tyrannical when dealing with people they deem unequal to themselves in the social standing their position gives them ; in fact, I am told, that it is said by some of themselves, or at least by female relations, "that the Navy is *the only aristocracy* in the United States." Therefore, to compel them to associate in office with common plebeians, such as compose the *personnel* of the steamboat service as now organized, would be as unjust to the naval officers as would be the examination of licensed officers of merchant ships by naval officers.

It is a well-known fact that some of the best pilots and engineers in the country, having charge of the finest merchant steamers running, are illiterate in everything pertaining to educational or theoretical knowledge, though having what is far better for the business their licenses authorize them to pursue, namely, an education in practical knowledge of their profession probably never yet attained by any naval officer educated at Annapolis. Nor could any naval officer obtain the position of one of these men upon a merchant steamer, even though he should offer to perform the duties for 50 per cent. of the salaries these men receive. If it is said that these facts will be properly considered by naval officers if they are assigned the duty of making these examinations, I need only refer to the fact that within a few months an eminently well-qualified practical engineer was driven from the employment of the civil branch of the Navy Department by a technical and theoretical examination made by a naval officer, notwithstanding said engineer had performed his duties in a satisfactory manner for ten years and upward. With this fact in view, it is my opinion that it would be a crime to subject the licensed officers of the merchant steamboat service *en masse* to the possibility of such manifest injustice, whereby they would be deprived of the privilege of earning a living in a profession they have acquired by long years of toil, supporting themselves meanwhile, while the officers who would condemn them for lack of the educational qualities possessed by themselves have acquired such superiority *at the expense of the Government*, with means in part furnished from the hard earnings of the men their technical education would condemn to idleness and their families to want.

The special case of injustice I have referred to will be found in the special report enclosed, marked "A," dated June 27, 1882.

In this connection I would make one more suggestion to the Hon. Secretary of the Navy for disposing of his surplus officers which would be more judicious than attaching them to the Steamboat-Inspection Service, and that is, for him to get Congress to enact a law authorizing him to furlough indefinitely all officers in turn for whom he cannot find employment "in these piping times of peace," not to be returned to duty until they could show at least two years' service on a merchant steamer. In such way they might, if assiduous in their duty, acquire at least some of the practical knowledge now possessed by officers of the Steamboat-Inspection Service and licensed officers of steam-vessels.

The Hon. Secretary of the Navy urges, as one of the reasons for transferring this service from the head of the Treasury to that of the Navy, that there are certain organic defects in the organization; but to argue so is equivalent to arguing that because a man's limbs are defective his head should be cut off.

The defects in the Service treated of by the Secretary, *as a matter of discovery by him*, have been frequently pointed out in the annual reports to Congress of the Secretary of the Treasury, and as under the direction of the latter officer the Steamboat-Inspection Service has reduced the fatalities on steam-vessels in the United States from one in each 55,714 persons, carried in 1851, to but one in 1,726,827 persons, carried in 1882, would seem to be conclusive that if this subject should be left to a decision of the people of the country they would prefer "to bear the ills" of the Service under the present head "than fly to others they know not of" under the Secretary of the Navy.

Besides, it would be well for the latter-named officer to bear in mind the scriptural quotation, "Let him not boast who putteth the armor on, but him that putteth it off."

Very respectfully,

JAS. A. DUMONT,
Supervising Inspector-General.

Hon. CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary of the Treasury.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE SUP'G INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF STEAMBOATS,
Washington, D. C., June 27, 1882.

SIR: On the 14th instant there was referred to this office a letter from the Honorable Secretary of the Navy, dated the 8th instant, enclosing a communication from W. H. Shock, chief of the Bureau of

Engineering of the Navy Department, dated the 6th instant, reflecting upon the manner in which licenses are issued to engineers of river steamers by the United States local inspectors of steam-vessels of the district of Baltimore, and referring particularly to the recent issue by them of a license, as chief engineer of river steamers, to one J. H. Sentenne, an assistant engineer in the Navy-Department building in this city, who, Mr. Shock asserts, "is absolutely ignorant of the principles of the ordinary steam-gauge and safety-valves attached to steam-boilers."

Mr. Shock also expresses the opinion that "if the examination of Mr. Sentenne by the local board of steamboat inspectors of Baltimore is an exponent of the others, then there should be no surprise shown at boiler explosions, or expensive repairs to the machinery of new steamers."

The above having been referred to this office "for immediate examination and report," by indorsement, dated the 14th instant, I have the honor to report that I have made an examination of Mr. Shock's charges, and find that Mr. Sentenne made a written application to the inspectors for a license as engineer, in letter dated May 4, 1882, (copy enclosed, marked "A,") in which he stated, as a part of his experience, that he had been an engineer of the United States steam transport "Ranger" during the war, and had acted "in the capacity of engineer on other steamers at various times." These statements of Mr. Sentenne, in writing, conflict with the oral statements made to Mr. Shock, as reported by that gentleman in his letter. Which statement is true, Mr. Sentenne alone can tell.

The law governing the granting of certificates to engineers by the local inspectors is as follows, (section 4441, Revised Statutes:)

"Whenever any person applies for authority to perform the duties of engineer of any steam-vessel, the inspectors shall examine the applicant as to his knowledge of steam-machinery, and his experience as an engineer, and also the proof which he produces in support of his claim; and if, upon full consideration, they are satisfied that his character, habits of life, knowledge and experience in the duties of an engineer are all such as to authorize the belief that he is a suitable and safe person to be intrusted with the powers and duties of such a station, they shall grant him a license, authorizing him to be employed in such duties for the term of one year * * *."

I am informed by Mr. Saville, the local inspector who conducts the examinations of engineers in the Baltimore district, that he examined Mr. Sentenne thoroughly in regard to his *practical* knowledge of engineering, and that he was satisfied with such examination, taken in connection with the proof presented, of Mr. Sentenne's capacity, which

proof consisted, in part, of written evidence of that gentleman's having been employed during the eight years last past as an engineer in connection with the Navy-Department building in this city—five years under the Government officers who had charge of the construction of the building, and *since April 24, 1879, in the employment of the Navy Department proper as assistant engineer, an employment he still holds, as may be seen by reference to the enclosed letter, marked "B," dated since the commencement of the present inquiry, and signed by J. E. Walker, Acting Secretary of the Navy.*

The following are some of the names of persons indorsing Mr. Sentenne's capacity: *Thomas Lincoln Casey*, Engineer Corps, U. S. A.; *R. W. Thompson*, late Secretary of the Navy; *Bartlett, Robbins & Co.*; *Otis Brothers & Co., et al.* Mr. Saville admits that Mr. Sentenne was not examined by him upon the *theoretical* principles of the steam-engine, safety-valves, gauges, &c.; not, however, because he does not appreciate the advantages of such knowledge in a steamboat engineer, but because if such knowledge was to be insisted upon in every case before granting a license, it would drive from the service of the steam merchant marine of the United States many of its best and safest *practical* engineers.

In conclusion, I would state, from the evidence presented, it is my opinion that Messrs. Lowry and Saville, the inspectors, were justified in granting a license to Mr. Sentenne, although I am free to say, and have so informed these gentlemen, that it was an error of judgment upon their part to grant a chief engineer's license to an original applicant, no matter how high his qualifications, either theoretical or practical, or both combined.

The majority of engineers in the merchant steam-marine service obtain their *practical* knowledge of the steam-engine and boilers while working, in many cases, day and night as firemen or oilers on steam-vessels, depending upon their wages to support themselves and families, therefore having no spare time to devote to the study of the principles and theories of the machinery whose practical workings have become to them "familiar as household words." Under such circumstances it cannot be expected of them that they should pass as rigid examinations in theories as would be properly required of graduates of the Naval Academy, who are educated, clothed, and fed at the public expense. Yet, judging by the complaint under consideration, engineer officers of the Navy seem shocked to learn that officers of the Steamboat-Inspection Service do not exact, before granting licenses to engineers in the merchant service, the same qualifications

required by the Government of the men who have been educated under its auspices. When the Government takes upon itself to educate engineers for the merchant service, supporting them while being educated, as it does now for the Navy, this seemingly desirable object may be reached.

Except for dress parade, the practical engineers of the steam merchant service of the United States are in no way inferior to their more highly educated brethren of the Navy in handling the machinery and boilers intrusted to them, both as regards safety and economy; and this, notwithstanding Mr. Shock's remarks, referring to the methods of examination of such officers, that "then there should be no surprise shown at boiler explosions, or expensive repairs to the machinery of river steamers."

Very respectfully,

JAS. A. DUMONT,
Supervising Inspector-General.

Hon. CHAS. J. FOLGER,
Secretary of the Treasury.

LIGHT-HOUSE BOARD.

TRANSFER TO NAVY DEPARTMENT.

REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE BOARD,
Washington, February 12, 1883.

SIR: The Light-House Board has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Department letter (E. W. C.) of January 17, transmitting, for consideration and reply, a printed report upon the Light-House Establishment received from the Secretary of the Navy, being the statement referred to in that part of his annual report containing the recommendation that the Light-House Service be transferred to the Navy Department.

In reply, I beg to say that at its session on January 18 this matter was referred by the Board to a special committee, consisting of Professor Julius E. Hilgard and its two secretaries, for consideration and report, and that at its session on February 10 the report of the committee was submitted.

This report, a copy of which is herewith transmitted, was, after some discussion, adopted by a majority vote.

Very respectfully,

S. C. ROWAN,

Vice-Admiral, U. S. N., Chairman.

The Honorable SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT,
OFFICE OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE BOARD,
Washington, February 9, 1883.

SIR: The special committee to which was referred the papers relative to the proposed transfer of the Light-House Board from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department respectfully returns them with the following report:

The paper on the U. S. Light-House Establishment, prepared by order of the Navy Department, gives a concise statement of its history and present organization, mentions briefly the administrative organization of the corresponding establishments in Great Britain and other countries, and closes with remarks intended to show that it would be advantageous to transfer the administrative direction of the Light-House Service from the Treasury to the Navy Department.

It is not alleged that the system is not working well, but rather it is claimed that the naval service would be benefited by such change. That such would be the case may well be doubted, since there are now employed in this service as many naval officers as can well find assignment in it without subverting the fundamental idea of its organization, namely, that both the military and naval services should be employed on the work according to their several special acquirements.

In the absence of any specified inconveniences or alleged ineffectiveness arising from the present system, and of any argument tending to show how such evils, if they existed, would be remedied by the proposed transfer, the Board contents itself with reaffirming the opinion expressed by it in February, 1862, namely, that the Light-House Establishment "is properly placed under the direction of the Secretary of the Treasury, since its object is the promotion of commerce, the legitimate duty of this officer, and since it is only under a neutral department that the members of the Army and Navy can harmoniously co-operate."

The report here quoted (Mis. Doc. No. 61, Senate, 37th Cong., 2d Sess.) was adopted unanimously at a meeting of the Light-House Board, at which were present the following-named officers:

On the part of the Navy—Commodore Shubrick, Chairman.

On the part of the Army—General J. G. Totten and Major A. A. Humphreys.

Civilians—Professor Bache and Professor Henry.

This report is an exhaustive exposition of the constitution and working of the establishment, submitted in response to a request from the Secretary of the Treasury, the Honorable S. P. Chase, for the

opinion of the board in relation to the transfer of the establishment to the Navy Department, as proposed in a bill then (February, 1862) before the Senate, "to reorganize the Navy Department." (Mis. Doc. No. 61, Senate, 37th Cong., 2d Sess.) The final conclusions of the Board were expressed as follows:

"In conclusion, the board respectfully suggest that so far from seeing any reason why the proposed change should be made, they see many causes to apprehend that such a change would derange the present system, diminish its efficiency, and increase the expense.

"1. The Light-House Establishment is intended principally to promote the commerce of the United States, and is consequently appropriately placed in charge of the Secretary of the Treasury, who has the direction of all other operations connected with this branch of the executive duty of the Government.

"2. The officers of the Navy and Army can best and most harmoniously co-operate under a neutral department like that of the Treasury.

"3. We do not hesitate to say that no officer of the Army or Navy possesses in himself the requisite amount of knowledge to properly direct all this service, and that he would be obliged to depend upon the advice and assistance of irresponsible agents; that although a proper person might acquire in time the requisite information, yet this would be at the expense of dear-bought experience, and that a recurrence of changes, such as is proposed, would deprive the system of all stability, and introduce a vacillating policy alike detrimental to efficiency and economy.

"4. With regard to economy of superintendence there can certainly be gained nothing on this score, since the members of the board receive no extra compensation for their services, the officers of the Army and Navy being employed upon it in the intervals of other duties."

It is needless to repeat the general arguments leading to these conclusions, since they are available in a printed form and hold good, with equal force, at the present time. The only material change which has taken place since then in the practical working of the establishment is in the fact that many more naval officers are now employed as light-house inspectors—a fact which is ascribed by the writer of the report to the Secretary of the Navy here under consideration to a "process of natural selection." If this phrase is meant to imply that it is the result of the development of a superior fitness on the part of naval officers, the board must take exception to the statement, and even consider it disingenuous, the simple fact being that there were a great many more naval officers available for shore-duty, while the

services of the Army engineer officers were urgently demanded for the superintendence and construction of other public works, in particular those of the improvement of rivers and harbors, to which the lighting and buoyage is an important and necessary adjunct. There are other errors of inference and statement in the paper under consideration which need not be specially adverted to, and are explicable from the fact that it was prepared by an officer having no personal knowledge of the working and requirements of the service, and was intended to constitute the basis of an argument for the proposed transfer.

Respectfully submitted.

J. E. HILGARD,

Chairman of Select Committee.

To the CHAIRMAN OF THE LIGHT-HOUSE BOARD.

BILL TO TRANSFER THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE REVENUE-CUTTER SERVICE TO THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

FORTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION.—H. R. 7157.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

JANUARY 2, 1883.—Read twice, referred to the Committee on Naval Affairs, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. B. W. HARRIS introduced the following bill:

A BILL to transfer the administration of the Revenue-Cutter Service to the Navy Department.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the thirtieth day of June, eighteen hundred and eighty-three, all the powers now exercised and duties performed by the Secretary of the Treasury in relation to the revenue cutters, their officers and crews, shall be exercised or performed by the Secretary of the Navy, and said cutters shall form a part of the Navy of the United States: *Provided,* That the Secretary of the Navy shall, upon the requisition of the Secretary of the Treasury, assign cutters to duty in the ports and along the coast, as may be necessary, and the collectors of customs shall continue, as heretofore, to direct the movements of vessels so assigned to their respective districts, under the supervision of the Secretary of the Treasury: *And provided further,* That nothing in this act shall be so construed as to affect or impair the powers conferred or duties devolved by the laws of the United States upon the accounting officers of the Treasury Department in relation to the adjustment and control of accounts and disbursements in the Revenue-Cutter Service.

SEC. 2. That the Secretary of the Treasury shall, at the close of the current fiscal year, transfer from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department all clerks and other persons employed in the office of the Revenue-Marine Division, together with the records appertaining thereto; and he shall cause to be transferred, in like manner, the vessels of the Revenue-Cutter Service, their appurtenances, and of all depots, stores, and other things belonging or pertaining to the said service.

SEC. 3. That the officers and enlisted men of the Revenue-Cutter Service shall form a part of the Naval Establishment of the United States, and shall be subject to all the laws governing the same; and such laws shall apply to the said officers and enlisted men in the same manner as to the officers and enlisted men of the Navy; and said officers and enlisted men shall be entitled to all benefits and privileges conferred thereby, but said officers and enlisted men shall be additional to the number now allowed by law in the Navy.

SEC. 4. That from and after the thirtieth day of June, eighteen hundred and eighty-three, the commissioned officers of the Revenue-Cutter Service shall form a corps in the Navy, to be known as the Revenue-Marine Corps; and the provisions of section twenty-seven hundred and fifty-one of the United States Revised Statutes are hereby extended to include assistant engineers among the said commissioned officers. And all commissions issued prior to this date to said officers, in accordance with law, shall be deemed commissions in the Revenue-Marine Corps of the Navy: *Provided*, That the pay and allowances and the relative rank of officers of the several grades on the active list of the Revenue-Marine Corps of the Navy shall remain the same as are now established by law for officers of the same grade in the Revenue-Cutter Service: *And provided further*, That the relative rank of said officers shall not be a bar to their retirement after having reached the prescribed age or performed the prescribed service.

SEC. 5. That cadets who complete their two years' probationary course in the year eighteen hundred and eighty-three shall, upon passing the usual examination, be appointed third lieutenants in the Revenue-Marine Corps of the Navy; but no appointments shall thereafter be made to said grade, nor shall any appointments be made to a higher grade, except by promotion from the grade below.

SEC. 6. That cadets who have completed one year of the required probationary course may be admitted to the third class at the Naval Academy as naval cadets, after passing a suitable examination, but no appointments shall hereafter be made of cadets in the Revenue-Marine Service.

SEC. 7. That the officers transferred to the Navy by this act shall be credited with the sea-service and other duty heretofore performed by them in the service of the United States, and shall receive all the benefits of such duty, and of the length of their continuous service, in the same manner as if they had been officers of the Navy during such service.

SEC. 8. That the number of officers in each grade of the Revenue-

Marine Corps shall be the number existing at the date of the passage of this act; but no appointments shall hereafter be made to said corps, except as provided in the fifth section of this act.

SEC. 9. That as vacancies occur at the foot of the list in the Revenue-Marine Corps, the number of officers now allowed by law in the corresponding grades of the line of the Navy and of the Engineer Corps of the Navy, respectively, shall be increased in proportion, so that for each unfilled vacancy in the list of third lieutenants of the Revenue-Marine Corps the number of ensigns in the Navy shall be increased by one; and for each unfilled vacancy in the list of second assistant engineers in the Revenue-Marine Corps the number of assistant engineers in the Navy shall be increased by one, and so on through the higher grades, whenever the grade below shall become exhausted; and thereafter the Secretary of the Navy shall be authorized to detail officers of the said grades in the line and engineer corps of the Navy for duty on board the revenue cutters.

SEC. 10. That all contracts entered into by the Secretary of the Treasury for the maintenance of the Revenue-Cutter Service, or for the construction or repair of the vessels thereof, in force on the thirtieth day of June, eighteen hundred and eighty-three, shall remain in force in the same manner as if made by the Secretary of the Navy in accordance with the provisions of this act.

SEC. 11. That all acts or parts of acts inconsistent with this act are hereby repealed.

BILL TO ESTABLISH A BUREAU OF MERCANTILE MARINE IN THE NAVY DEPARTMENT.

FORTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION.—H. R. 7158.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

JANUARY 2, 1833.—Read twice, referred to the Committee on Commerce, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. B. W. HARRIS introduced the following bill:

A BILL to establish a Bureau of Mercantile Marine in the Navy Department.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That from and after the passage of this act the Secretary of the Navy shall have charge and supervision of the execution of all laws relating to the mercantile marine of the United States, and shall exercise all the powers and perform all the duties that are now by law or by custom exercised or performed by the Secretary of the Treasury in relation to the registry, enrollment, and license of vessels, the regulation of steam-vessels, and the shipment of seamen: *Provided,* That nothing in this act shall be so construed as to affect or impair the powers conferred or the duties devolved by the laws of the United States upon the accounting officers of the Treasury Department in relation to the adjustment and control of accounts and disbursements.

SEC. 2. That from and after the passage of this act the Secretary of the Navy shall exercise all the powers and perform all the duties which are now exercised or performed by the circuit courts of the United States in relation to the appointment and removal of shipping commissioners and to the regulation of shipping offices.

SEC. 3. That from and after the passage of this act there shall be established in the Navy Department a Bureau of Mercantile Marine.

SEC. 4. That the chief of the Bureau of Mercantile Marine shall be appointed from the list of officers of the Navy, not below the grade of commander, in the same manner and under the same provisions as

other chiefs of bureaus in the Navy Department. He shall perform, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, all executive duties relating to the mercantile marine which are or which may be hereafter placed under the supervision of the Navy Department.

SEC. 5. That the Secretary of the Treasury shall transfer from the Treasury Department to the Navy Department such clerks in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury as perform the duties over which supervision and control is given by this act to the Secretary of the Navy, as also the clerks and other persons employed under the laws of the United States in the several bureaus or offices which are transferred by this act to the Department of the Navy, as well as the records appertaining to the said offices or bureaus.

SEC. 6. That the annual statement of vessels registered, enrolled, and licensed under the laws of the United States, prepared in accordance with section three hundred and forty of the Revised Statutes of the United States by the Chief of the Bureau of Statistics, shall hereafter be prepared by the Chief of the Bureau of Mercantile Marine, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy.

SEC. 7. That there shall be attached to the office of the Secretary of the Navy a board, to be known as the mercantile marine board, which shall be composed of the following persons: the Chief of the Bureau of Mercantile Marine and the Supervising Inspector-General of Steamboats ex officio; five civilians, to be appointed by the President, among whom there shall be one experienced seaman and navigator, one ship-builder skilled in designing and constructing vessels of wood and iron, one scientific man of eminent attainments, and two persons of special experience in commercial and maritime affairs; and three officers of the Navy, likewise to be appointed by the President, among whom there shall be one naval constructor, one chief engineer, and one line officer, the last-named to act as secretary of the board.

SEC. 8. That the Secretary of the Navy shall be ex officio president of the mercantile marine board.

SEC. 9. That the Chief of the Bureau of Mercantile Marine shall be chairman of the board in the absence of the Secretary of the Navy.

SEC. 10. That the mercantile marine board shall meet for the transaction of business on the first Mondays in March, June, September, and December; but the Secretary of the Navy may convene the board whenever in his judgment the exigencies of the service may require it.

SEC. 11. That the mercantile marine board shall consider and investigate the condition of the mercantile marine of the United States,

and shall advise and assist the Secretary of the Navy in making rules and regulations for executing the laws in relation to the merchant marine.

SEC. 12. That the mercantile marine board shall make a report of its investigations each year to the Secretary of the Navy, who shall forward said report to Congress, together with the testimony taken in the course of the inquiry, and such recommendations thereon as he may deem necessary.

SEC. 13. That no naval or civil officer assigned to duty by the Navy Department under the provisions of this act shall receive any additional salary therefor, except the legal allowance for mileage or traveling or other expenses, but members of the mercantile marine board, not otherwise connected with the public service, shall receive as compensation ten dollars per day while actually employed, and their necessary traveling expenses.

SEC. 14. That the powers and duties relating to the registry, enrollment, or license of vessels and their admeasurement for tonnage, now exercised or performed by the collectors and surveyors of customs, shall hereafter be exercised or performed by the local inspectors of steam-vessels; and all records relating to said registry, enrollment, and license, or to the sale, transfer, or hypothecation of vessels, now required to be kept in the offices of the collectors of customs, shall hereafter be kept in the offices of the local inspectors.

SEC. 15. That the fees paid to local inspectors for the performance of the duties specified in section fourteen shall be the same as those now allowed by law to the collectors and surveyors of customs; but the fees for the measurement of vessels for tonnage shall not exceed five dollars for any vessel which the local board is required to inspect, or ten dollars for any other vessel.

SEC. 16. That so much of section forty-four hundred and five of the United States Revised Statutes as provides that the supervising inspectors and the Supervising Inspector-General shall assemble together as a board, and shall establish rules and regulations, and all other acts or parts of acts relating to the meetings of said board, are hereby repealed; and from and after the passage of this act the meetings of the said board shall be discontinued.

SEC. 17. That the Secretary of the Navy shall hereafter appoint all local inspectors and assistant inspectors, special inspectors of foreign steam-vessels, and clerks to local boards; and he shall likewise appoint in each collection district on the seaboard and the great lakes where a local board of inspectors is now established by law, an additional in-

spector, to be called an inspector of navigation, who shall be a member of the local board of inspectors, and who, from his experience in sea-going vessels and his knowledge of navigation, shall be qualified to report on the strength and sufficiency of the equipment of vessels, the completeness and efficiency of the navigating instruments and charts supplied to the same, and to examine into the fitness of any applicant for the position of master, mate, or pilot of any vessel.

SEC. 18. That the inspectors of navigation shall receive the same compensation, respectively, as is now allowed by — to other inspectors in the same district.

SEC. 19. That when the inspection of a vessel is completed and the inspectors approve the vessel and her equipment throughout, they shall make and subscribe a certificate to the Bureau of Mercantile Marine, the same as is now required by law to be made to the collector of customs; but all such inspections shall include, in addition to the examination now required by law, an examination of the vessels' equipment, and of her navigating instruments and charts.

SEC. 20. That the original certificates of the inspectors shall be retained on file in the Bureau of Mercantile Marine, which shall furnish three certified copies thereof to the master or owners of the vessel therein named.

SEC. 21. That the inspection of passenger vessels now made by inspectors of customs in accordance with section forty-two hundred and sixty-four of the Revised Statutes of the United States, shall hereafter be made by the local inspectors of steam-vessels, who shall sign such reports as are now required to be signed by the collectors of customs.

SEC. 22. That any qualified commissioned officer of the Navy may be detailed or appointed as supervising inspector-general, supervising inspector, local inspector, or assistant inspector of steam-vessels, or special inspector of foreign vessels, whenever a vacancy may occur.

SEC. 23. That at all places where local boards of inspectors are authorized by law marine offices shall be established, under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy, and such offices shall be occupied by the local inspectors and shipping commissioners; but no expense shall be incurred, nor shall any person be employed in any marine office, except with the approval of the Secretary of the Navy.

